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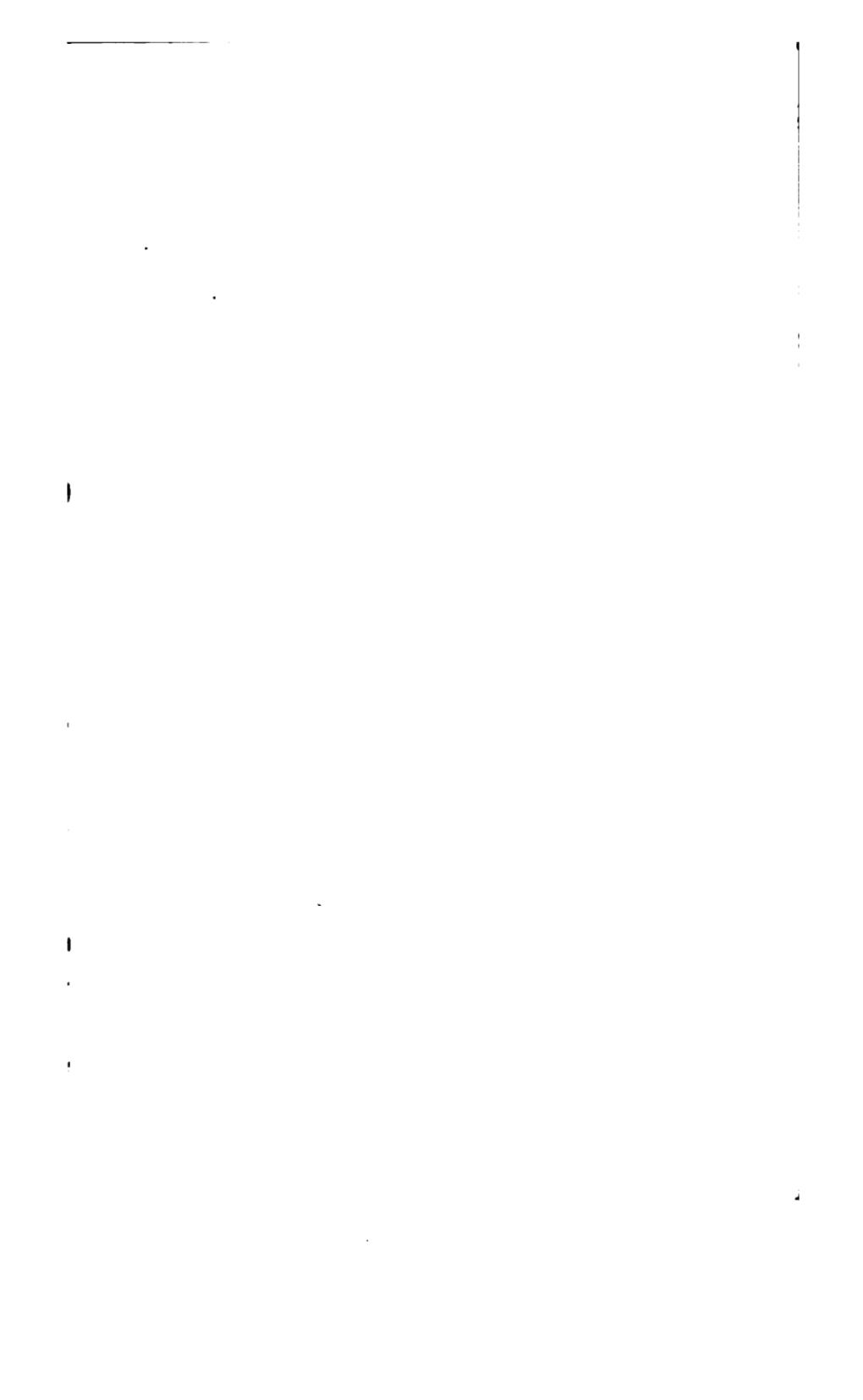
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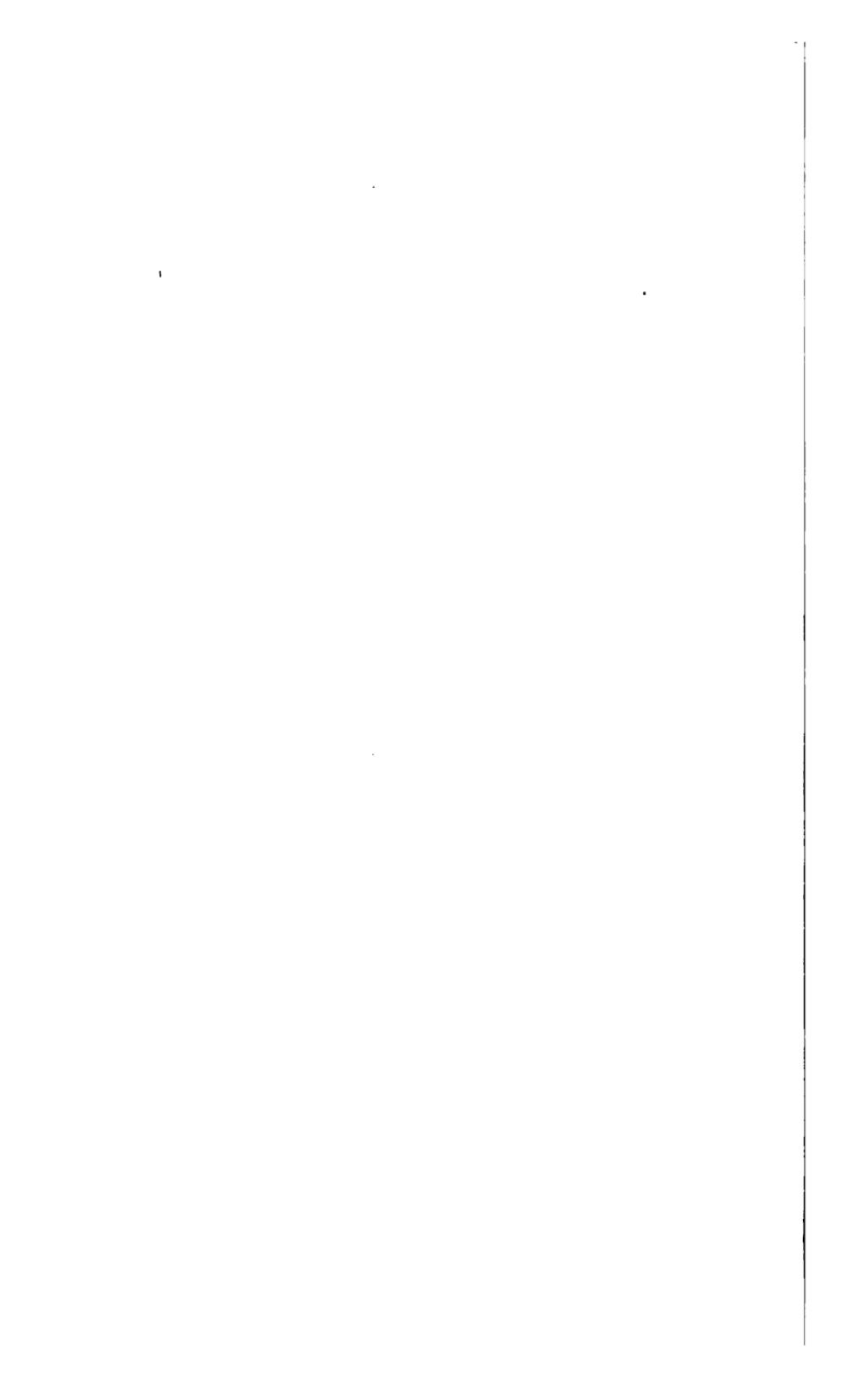


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To C. S. Parnell M.P.
(Present)

From an admirer who
hopes that Irelands latest
Agitators will succeed in
the accomplishment of their
plans.

Hartford, Ct. U. S.

IRELAND AND HER AGITATORS.

Jan. 12th A.D. 1880

Richard W. Clancy

MYIEH





Engraved by D. Corneil

Published by W. H. Collier

You faithful Servt
Daniel O'Connell

Daniel O'Connell M.P.

IRELAND

with the affectionate respects of
AND The Author

HER AGITATORS.

1848

BY

WILLIAM J. O'NEILL DAUNT, ESQ.

AUTHOR OF "SAINTS AND SINNERS."

"We know our duty to our Sovereign, and are loyal. We know also our duty to ourselves, and are resolved to be free."

Declaration of Dungannon Volunteers, 1779.

"Sir, I believe that THE IRISH CONFEDERACY CANNOT BE PUT DOWN BY FORCE."

Speech of Sir Robert Peel, 18th April, 1845.

E

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1845.

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DEDICATION.

TO THE PEOPLE OF IRELAND.

FELLOW-COUNTRYMEN,

I dedicate to you the following pages, which may help, it is hoped, to exemplify the causes of Irish dissatisfaction with the Union ; to show how impossible it is that the Irish people should regard the extinction of their Parliament otherwise than as a national curse and a national degradation.

I have not sought to make my book an elaborated treatise on Repeal. I have done little more than to collect—not very methodically—a few of the more salient characteristics of English influence in Ireland for the last sixty years, and to chronicle a few of the events connected with our efforts to resist that influence.

The temporalities of the Established Church are the only mainstay of the Union. They furnish to the large and intelligent body who directly enjoy them, a powerful pecuniary inducement to sustain the Union ; and also to enlist their flocks in its support, by stimulating their fears of a Catholic ascendancy in the event of Repeal. If it were not for the temporal possessions of the Established Church, there would not be a dozen Unionists in Ireland.

The instinct of every Irishman—unless he is influenced by sectarian animosities and fears —will impel him not only to abhor the destruction of his country's legislature, but to hate the destroyer also. There never was a greater blunder than to call the Union a bond of international affection.

When I was a boy of ten years old, I was told by my seniors that we once had a Parliament in Ireland, and that English influence extinguished it. Thenceforth I regarded England with an abhorrence, which reflection may possibly have mitigated, but which Repeal

alone can fully eradicate. Religious prejudices had nothing to do with the matter, for I was born of a Protestant family.

I do not state this from the absurd notion that any importance attaches to myself or my sentiments. I make the avowal because it records my individual participation in a sentiment which equally actuates millions ; and which, by its general diffusion, assumes an aspect that is anything but contemptible. Ireland can *only* be conciliated by the Repeal.

I am, FELLOW-COUNTRYMEN,

Your most devoted servant,

W. J. O'NEILL DAUNT.

*Kilcascan, Co. Cork,
December, 1844.*

ERRATA.

Page 69, line 24—For *very* read *when*.
Page 118, line 5—Before *two rival creeds*, read *the professors of*.
Page 191, line 2 from bottom—dele *that* before *lost*.
Page 192 (note)—For 16 read 67.
Page 197, last line—For *from* read *for*.
Page 223, line 11—For *friends* read *fiends*.
Page 288, line 18—For *county* read *country*.
Page 336, line 1—Before *by the First James*, read *and encroached upon*.

CHAPTER I.

CASTLEREAGH AND MR. CAREW.—POLITICAL AND SOCIAL DIVISION OF PROTESTANTS AND CATHOLICS.—PROTESTANT PATRIOTS OF 1782.—MANNERS OF THE PERIOD.—A BACCHANALIAN DUELLIST.

WHEN Lord Castlereagh visited Mr. Shapland Carew, the member for the county of Wexford, in order to offer him a peerage and some other more substantial advantages, as inducements to vote for the Legislative Union, Mr. Carew indignantly exclaimed,

“I will expose your insolent offer in the House of Commons to-night! I will get up in my place and charge you with the barefaced attempt to corrupt a legislator!”

Castlereagh coolly replied,

“Do so, if you will. But if you do, I will immediately get up and contradict you in presence of the house; I will declare, upon my honour, that you have uttered a falsehood; and I shall follow up that declaration by demanding satisfaction as soon as we are beyond the reach of the Serjeant-at-arms.”

Mr. Carew desired the noble Secretary of State to get out of his house with all possible expedition, on pain of being kicked down the hall-door steps by his footman. Castlereagh accordingly withdrew, but Carew did not execute his threat of exposing the transaction to the House. It were idle to speculate on the motives which induced him to practise that forbearance. The incident vividly illustrates the desperate and unprincipled determination with which the government and its tool pursued their object.

The Irish aristocracy and gentry of that period were a race of men who lived high, drank hard, gamed deeply, fought duels, and often pursued a career of reckless extravagance. These habits were generated by their situation, which rendered them, to a very considerable extent, the irresponsible monopolists of local power. They largely partook of the national taste for splendor and magnificence; a taste which, duly regulated, tends to adorn the land, and to refine and civilize the people; but which, in the circumstances then affecting the upper classes in Ireland, snared its votaries into that wasteful and ruinous expenditure which threw so many of their number upon the worst expedients of political corruption to retrieve their shattered fortunes.

The penal laws had worked a most disastrous

separation of the people from the gentry. The dominant Protestant party—the jovial, fox-hunting, claret-drinking squirearchy—all looked down on the great mass of their Catholic countrymen as a totally inferior race of beings, intended by God Almighty for the inheritance of serfdom, and with whom it would be a degradation to suppose they could have the least community of interest. They were trained from the cradle to look thus scornfully on the Catholics. Contempt was a doctrine of their political bible.

On the part of the Catholics, the moral consequences of the penal gulph that divided them from their more favored countrymen, were various, according to the varying dispositions of men. There was, amongst some, the re-action of deep and deadly hate. Others were awed into a social idolatry of Protestants. I know one most respectable and very wealthy Catholic merchant, who declares, that when a boy at school, about the year 1780, he felt overwhelmed and bewildered at the honor of being permitted to play marbles with a Protestant school-fellow ! Every Protestant cobbler and tinker conceived himself superior to the Catholic of ancient lineage and ample inheritance. No wonder that there should have been offensive assumption on the one side, and rankling animosity as well as degrading servility

on the other, when the law placed all the good things of the state in the hands of the few, and excluded the many from all participation in place, power, and emolument.

The Protestant aristocracy of Ireland wanted that wholesome check, that strong guarantee of political honesty, which would have arisen from contact with, and representative dependence on, the people. A whole people never can be bribed. But the *people*—the Catholic masses of Ireland—were a political nonentity for nearly the entire century. They formed no element of power; no ingredient in the speculating politician's calculations; the statute law had absolutely assumed their non-existence! And even after some of the restrictions on Catholics had been removed, the sentiment of Protestant contempt for Papists survived in full force; preventing that cordial coalition, that thorough mutual understanding between the two classes, which alone could have availed to defeat the ministerial assault on Irish legislative independence.

The Protestant nobility and squirearchy, half fearing, and entirely despising, their disfranchised countrymen, had for a long time looked upon themselves rather in the light of an English garrison occupying Ireland, than as the legitimate aristocracy of the country. Yet, despite the colossal power of corruption, and the pernicious

influence of religious bigotry, the very circumstance of their residing in, and making laws for Ireland, began to produce its natural results on the minds of her domestic rulers about the time of the American war ; the spark of patriotism had ignited the Protestant heart, and blazed up with dazzling brilliancy in the memorable and successful struggle of the Irish Volunteers for free trade and constitutional independence in 1782.

But—fatal error !—the Catholics were not incorporated into the constitution. Glorious and imposing was the superstructure, but it was fated to perish, because its foundations were too narrow to sustain its weight. It did not rest on the broad basis of the people.

The Protestant patriotism of 1782 was a gallant and goodly display ; yet it presented some anomalous features. There was in it a great deal real, and something illusory. It was a curious sight, that of men in arms to enfranchise their country, yet resolved to perpetuate the *disfranchisement* of the great body of its inhabitants !—men in arms to assert the dignity and honour of Ireland, yet entertaining a cordial contempt for five out of every six of its people ! In truth, the Protestants had been so long accustomed to omit the Catholics from all their political arithmetic, that they had learned to look upon themselves—being then about one-sixth—as forming the sum-total

of the Irish nation. The thunder of Grattan had not yet shaken the strongholds of their bigotry. They thought it a mighty fine thing to establish a free constitution of whose benefits they were to be the monopolists.

Another anomaly was to be found in the fact, that the bitterest enemies of Catholic emancipation were sometimes the most strenuous champions of theoretic Irish independence. At a meeting of some of the friends of the Volunteer movement, held in the house in Grafton-street now used as the Royal Hibernian Academy, at which Flood, Grattan, and Bartholomew Hoare attended, Flood, whose hostility to the Catholic claims was inflexible, actually proposed to his confrères a plan of total separation from England ! Grattan said, “If you persevere in your proposition, I certainly shall not oppose it here ; but I shall quit this room, and proceed at once to the castle—to my Sovereign’s castle—and there disclose the treason—and denounce the traitor.”

Yet Flood—the separatist—could not tolerate the notion of emancipating the Catholics ; while Grattan, the zealous friend of the Catholics, and the champion of a free Irish Parliament in connexion with the British crown, denounced the ultra-patriotism of the “Protestant ascendancy” statesman as treason ! Flood, I need not add, withdrew his proposition.

Emancipation, under an Irish Parliament, would have speedily blended all classes of religionists into one political mass. But the Catholics continued unemancipated ; the Protestants remained a separate and exclusive band, distinct from, and rarely sympathising with, their fellow-countrymen. Thus placed far aloof from the people, there was little to countervail the corrupting influence of a profligate court with which they were brought into close contact, and which derived immense facilities of corruption from the number of pocket-boroughs in the Irish House of Commons. With an unreformed parliament, and an unemancipated people, the distributors of place and pension enjoyed an easy sway. The pension list was swollen to an enormous magnitude ; the number of sinecures incessantly augmented ; and parliamentary profligacy came at last to be so general, that men lost all sense of its shame through the force of its prevalence.

Whilst the Government thus practised corruption on the largest scale, there were social vices peculiar to the period, which extensively prevailed amongst the upper ranks. Of these practices the principal were duelling and drinking, which were carried to an excess, happily now almost incredible. There was something exceedingly bizarre in the notions and habits of

a first-rate bacchanalian duellist. Take, for a specimen, Mr. Bagenal, of Dunleckny, in the county Carlow—*King* Bagenal, as he was called throughout his extensive territories ; and within their bounds no monarch was ever more absolute ! Of high Norman lineage—of manners elegant, fascinating, polished by extensive intercourse with the great world—of princely income, and of boundless hospitality, Mr. Bagenal possessed all the qualities and attributes calculated to procure for him popularity with every class. A terrestrial paradise was Dunleckny for all lovers of good wine, good horses, good dogs, and good society. His stud was magnificent, and he had a large number of capital hunters at the service of visitors who were not provided with steeds of their own. He derived great delight from encouraging the young men who frequented his house, to hunt, and drink, and solve points of honour at twelve paces. His politics were popular ; he was the mover of the grant of £50,000 to Grattan in 1782 ; he was at that time member for the county of Carlow.

Enthroned at Dunleckny, he gathered around him a host of spirits congenial to his own. He had a tender affection for pistols ; a brace of “saw-handles,” loaded, were often laid before him on the dinner-table. After dinner, the claret

was produced in an unbroached cask ; Bagenal's practice was to tap the cask with a bullet from one of his pistols, whilst he kept the other *in terrorem* for any of the convives who should fail in doing ample justice to the wine.

Nothing could be more inimitable than the bland, fatherly, affectionate air, with which the old gentleman used to impart to his junior guests the results of his own experience, and the moral lessons which should regulate their conduct through life.

"In truth, my young friends, it behoves a youth entering the world to make a character for himself. Respect will only be accorded to character. A young man must show his proofs. I am not a quarrelsome person—I never was—I hate your mere duellist—but experience of the world tells me that there are knotty points in life of which the only solution is the *saw-handle*. Rest upon your pistols, my boys ! Occasions will arise in which the use of them is absolutely indispensable to character. A man, I repeat, must show his proofs—in this world courage never will be taken upon trust ! I protest to Heaven, my dear young friends, that I advise you exactly as I should advise my own son!"

And having thus discharged his conscience, he would look blandly round upon his guests with the most patriarchal air imaginable.

His practice accorded with his precept. Some pigs, the property of a gentleman who had recently settled near Dunleckny, strayed into an enclosure of King Bagenal's, and rooted up a flower-knot. The incensed monarch ordered that the porcine trespassers should be shorn of their ears and tails ; and he transmitted the severed appendages to the owner of the swine, with an intimation, that *he*, too, deserved to have his ears docked ; and that only he had not got a tail, he (King Bagenal) would sever the caudal member from his dorsal extremity. "Now," quoth Bagenal, "if he's a gentleman, he *must* burn powder after such a message as that." Nor was he disappointed. A challenge was given by the owner of the pigs ; Bagenal accepted it with ready alacrity ; only stipulating, that as he was old and feeble, being then in his seventy-ninth year, he should fight sitting in his arm-chair ; and that, as his infirmities prevented early rising, the "meeting" should take place in the afternoon. "Time was," said the old man, with a sigh, "that I would have risen before daybreak to fight at sunrise—but we can't do these things at seventy-eight. Well, Heaven's will be done !"

They fought at twelve paces—Bagenal wounded his antagonist severely ; the arm of the chair in which he sat was shattered, but he escaped

unhurt ; and he ended the day with a glorious carouse, tapping the claret as usual, by firing a pistol at the cask.

The traditions of Dunleckny allege, that when Bagenal, in the course of his tour through Europe, visited the petty court of Mecklenburgh-Strelitz, the Grand Duke, charmed with his magnificence and the reputation of his wealth, made him an offer of the hand of the fair Charlotte—who, being politely rejected by King Bagenal, was afterwards accepted by King George the Third.

Such was the lord of Dunleckny ; and such was many an Irish squire of the day. Recklessness characterised the time. And yet there was a polished courtesy, a high-bred grace in the manners of men who imagined that to shoot, or to be shot at on “the sod,” was a perfectly indispensable ingredient in the character of a gentleman. Look at Bagenal, nearly four-score, seated at the head of his table. You observe the refined urbanity of his manner, and the dignified air which is enhanced, not impaired, by the weight of years. You perceive that the patriarchal Mentor, whose milk-white tresses evidence his venerable age, is mildly and courteously pouring forth his lore for the edification of his audience. You draw near, to participate

in the instructions of the ancient moralist.—What a shock—half ludicrous, half horrible—to find that he inculcates the necessity of practice with the “saw-handles,” as the grand, primary virtue which forms the gentleman !

At a somewhat later period, the same extravagant ideas were still prevalent. At a contested election for the county of Cork, the notorious “Bully Egan” fought fourteen duels. Pugnacious barristers, whose knowledge of law was not very profound, often made large sums of money at elections where “fighting counsel” were required. Elections in those days often lasted a fortnight or three weeks, and sometimes averaged from one to two duels a day. It accordingly was the policy of the candidates to select good shots for their counsel.

Within the present century, Mr. Thomas O’M* * * * was counsel at a Clare election, where he conducted the business of his client in a style so pacific as to excite the astonishment of a friend, who was well aware of his fire-eating propensities. “Why, Tom,” said his friend, “you are marvellously quiet ! How does it happen that you haven’t got into any rumpus ?”

“Because my client does not pay me *fighting price*,” replied Tom, with the most business-like air in the world.

The tariff included two scales of payment for election counsel—the talking price, and the fighting price.*

These delirious notions were, undoubtedly, the indirect results of the anomalous position of the “Protestant garrison” of Ireland; of their immense and irresponsible social power; and of the lax, devil-may-care morality systematically acted on in the government of the country, by successive viceroys.

* At an election for the county of Wexford in 1810, when Messieurs Alcock and Colclough were rival candidates, some tenants of a friend of Alcock declared their intention of voting for Colclough. “Receive their votes at your peril!” exclaimed Alcock. Colclough replied that he had not asked their votes, and that he certainly would not be bullied into rejecting them. Alcock thereupon challenged Colclough to fight; they met on the next day; the crowd who assembled on the ground *included many magistrates*; Colclough was shot through the heart, and Alcock having thus got rid of his opponent, was duly returned for the county. He was tried at the next assizes for the murder of Colclough. Baron Smith publicly protested against finding him guilty, and the jury unanimously acquitted him.

CHAPTER II.

PERSECUTION OF THE PEOPLE.—WORDS OF EDMUND BURKE.—EVIDENCE OF LORD GOSFORD AND LORD MOIRA.—EXPLOIT OF THE FRAZER FENCIBLES.—LORD NORBURY.

It is sometimes weakly urged that the venality of the last Irish parliament is a perpetual disqualifier of the Irish people from the right of self-legislation. It might as well be said, that the owner of an estate was disqualified from the rights of possession by the rascality of his agent. The Irish people had nothing to do with the venality of their legislators. The sin was ~~not~~ theirs, nor should its punishment be visited on them. And in the last grand struggle, the men who really *were* their representatives—the men who were returned for open, popular constituencies—nearly all voted *against* the ministerial project, and for the preservation of the Irish Parliament.

In glancing, however rapidly, at the present agitation in Ireland, we should not lose sight of that which ever is uppermost in the mind of every Irish Repealer—namely, that the Union is the offspring of conjoined fraud and force; that the means by which it was achieved were such

as would inevitably vitiate any private transaction between two individuals. That Lord Castle-reagh found many nominees for pocket boroughs who were not quite so impracticable as Mr. Shapland Carew, was by no means the worst feature in the case. The machinery which was to effectuate the Union, had been long in preparation. So far back as 1792, Edmund Burke had used these remarkable words: "By what I learn, the Castle considers the *outlawry* (or at least what I look on as such) of the great mass of the people of Ireland, as an unalterable maxim in the government of Ireland."

With respect to the turbulent condition of Ireland some years prior to the Union; with respect to the share the "authorities" had in producing that turbulence, I do not mean to enter into lengthened details: the following brief statements must suffice.

In 1795 the hopes of the Catholics for immediate and full emancipation, were encouraged by the English Government, who sent over Earl Fitzwilliam in that year as viceroy; authorised to acquiesce in the liberal measures of the friends of the Catholics. In the previous year, Henry Grattan had an interview with Pitt, in which he was requested by the premier to draw up a list of his demands on behalf of Ireland. Grattan

complied, and included Catholic Emancipation in his catalogue. Pitt in reply, observed, that Emancipation should not be brought forward as a cabinet measure; but that the Government, if pressed, would yield it.

The hopes of the Catholics thus excited to the utmost pitch, were damped by the sudden removal of Lord Fitzwilliam from Ireland, and the appointment of a successor of adverse politics.

This, in itself, was necessarily productive of great popular dissatisfaction; but discontent was frightfully increased by the system of torture put in practice against the people in various districts.

The following evidence, given by Lord Gosford, is descriptive of that system as it existed in 1795 and 1796:—

“A persecution,” says his lordship,* “accompanied with all the circumstances of ferocious cruelty, is now raging in this country. Neither age nor sex, nor even acknowledged innocence, can excite mercy. The only crime which the wretched objects are charged with is, the profession of the Roman Catholic faith. A lawless banditti have constituted themselves judges of

* Address of Lord Gosford to the magistracy of Armagh, printed in the Dublin Journal, 5th Jan. 1796.

this new delinquency, and the sentence they denounce is equally concise and terrible. It is nothing less than confiscation of property and immediate banishment. It would be painful to detail the horrors of this proscription—a proscription that exceeds, in the number of its victims, every example of ancient and modern history. For, when have we heard or read of more than half the inhabitants of a populous country being deprived of the fruits of their industry, and driven to seek shelter for themselves and their families where chance may guide them? *These horrors are now acting with impunity.* The spirit of justice, without which law is tyranny, has disappeared in this country."

Forcible words, yet not more forcible than true. The persecution Lord Gosford describes took place in 1795. As to particular cruelties committed on the people by the armed agents of power, the following quotation from Lord Moira, will furnish illustrative specimens:—

"I have," says Lord Moira, "known a man, in order to extort confession of a supposed crime, or of that of some neighbour, picketed till he actually fainted—picketted a second time, till he fainted again; and when he came to himself, picketed a third time, till he once more fainted; and all this upon mere suspicion. Men had been

taken and hung up till they were half dead, and afterwards threatened with a repetition of this treatment, unless they made a confession of their imputed guilt."*

Lord Moira added this very remarkable statement:—

"These," said he, "*were not particular acts of cruelty, but formed part of the new system.*"

The object of that system was to carry the Union.

As to the administration of the law, it was not very easy for the people to repose their unlimited confidence in its justice, when such an incident as the following could occur:

In the spring of 1797, Solicitor-General Toler, afterwards Lord Norbury, presided, during the illness of one of the judges, in the criminal court at the assizes for the county Kildare. Captain Frazer, a Scotchman, was prosecuted for the murder of an aged peasant named Christopher Dixon, under the following circumstances:—

Part of the county of Kildare near Carbery was at that time proclaimed. Other parts were exempt from proclamation. There was a flying camp in the proclaimed part, consisting of the

* Speech of Lord Moira in the British House of Lords, 22nd November, 1797.

Frazer fencibles, under the command of Captain Frazer.

One night on his return, through Cloncurry, to the camp, from a very jovial dinner party at Maynooth, Frazer saw an old man (Dixon), then past eighty, repairing a cart by the road side.—Thinking that he was in his own proclaimed district, he seized Dixon for being out after sunset, and made him mount behind the orderly dragoon in attendance, with the purpose of taking him to the camp to flog. Passing a turnpike gate, the old man asserted that the proclamation did not extend to the district in which he had been found; at the same time appealing to the gate-keeper to confirm his assertion. The gate-keeper said that the district in question had *not* been proclaimed; upon which the old man descended from the crupper of the orderly's horse and went towards home. Frazer and the dragoon furiously pursued him, and gave him sixteen wounds, of which seven or eight were mortal. A coroner's jury returned a verdict of "wilful murder" against the homicides. A neighbouring magistrate, Mr. Thomas Ryan, endeavoured to take Frazer, but his soldiers resisted. Mr. Ryan reported the facts to Lord Cloncurry, who was then in Dublin, and who directed his son, the Hon. Mr.

Lawless,* to visit the Commander of the Forces, Lord Carhampton, in order to demand the body of Frazer in pursuance of the provisions of the mutiny act.

Mr. Lawless made the demand in presence of Mr. Ryan, and of Colonel (now General Sir George) Cockburn. Lord Carhampton refused to give up Frazer. Mr. Lawless thereupon told his lordship that Frazer was *ipso facto* cashiered.

At the assizes Frazer went voluntarily to be tried. His approach to the court-house was a sort of ovation; for he was attended by a military band playing “Croppies lie down!”

Mr. Toler presided. On the bench beside him sat the late Duke of Leinster, the unfortunate Lord Edward Fitzgerald, and Mr. Lawless.

The facts of the case were distinctly proved by unexceptionable witnesses. There were many persons examined, who deposed to the good and peaceable character of the deceased; his exemption from all “treasonable” machinations; and his general habits of morality and industry. There were also witnesses upon the other side who gave a character for all the virtues under heaven, especially the military virtues, to Captain Frazer and the orderly dragoon.

Mr. Toler charged home for an acquittal.

* The present Lord Cloncurry.

He regretted the homicide—it was very unfortunate—good, respectable old man—worthy character, and so forth—witnesses of unimpeachable credit had said so. There had, however, also been witnesses who gave a most admirable character to the gallant captain in the dock, which the jury would by no means overlook—he was a brave and faithful soldier to his king—loyal—devoted—in a word, the sort of person needed in this unhappy country at the present time. The occurrence for which he was tried was most deeply to be deplored; he would not disparage the deceased—he would only say that *if he had been as good as the witnesses for the prosecution had represented him, HE WAS WELL OUT OF A WICKED WORLD!* *If, on the contrary, he were a fireband*—[here Toler looked significantly at Mr. Lawless]—THE WORLD WAS WELL RID OF HIM!

A judicial dilemma well worthy of record!

The jury acquitted Captain Frazer.

Those who brand with every epithet of ignominy the names and principles of the insurgents of 1798, should ask themselves whether such elaborate pains had ever been taken in any other country to drive a reluctant people into insurrection? With the cup of political hope held brimful to the lips, to be rudely dashed aside next moment; with a regularly organized system of

torture ; with a social condition of frightful insecurity ; without any protection from the established tribunals of law—whither were the people to turn for succour ?—To the so-called tribunals of justice ?—A sanguinary buffoon upon the bench might openly recommend the impunity of their murderers, in a harangue of solemn banter. Should they turn to the government for help ?—The government had a direct interest in their sufferings and turbulence. Whither, then, were the people to look for the removal of their grievances ? They were absolutely driven to their own rude, undisciplined, and inefficient warfare. The blazing cottage—the tortured peasant*—the violated wife or daughter—the familiar outrages on property and life—the demoniac license of which they were the victims, literally left them no alternative but the pike. Instead of their outbreak in 1798 being a topic for modern astonishment, the real wonder would have been, if, with such intolerable provocation, they had not resorted to arms. Good men may now regard their

* There were several descriptions of torture familiarly used. There was picketing, half-hanging ; there was the torture of the pitch-cap—*i. e.* a cap smeared with hot pitch, applied to the shorn head of the victim, and dragged off when cold, tearing the scalp along with it. Another torture consisted in cutting the hair close to the roots in the form of a cross on the crown of the head, and then setting fire to gunpowder strown in the furrows thus formed.

struggle with the feeling expressed in the celebrated lines of a Protestant student of Trinity College—*

“ Who fears to speak of Ninety-eight ?
Who blushes at the name ?
When cowards mock the patriot’s fate,
Who hangs his head for shame ? ”

No. The true shame and sin were with the government, whose oppressive crimes compelled a peace-loving people to take the field in their own defence.

The country soon became embroiled enough to satisfy the most sanguine aspirations of the Unionists. Troops were poured in, to the number of 137,000. It should not be forgotten that the government might have prevented the outbreak of the rebellion by arresting its leaders ; as the Castle had a spy, named M’Guane, in the rebel camp for ten months prior to the explosion ; and by this spy our rulers were furnished with constant and minute intelligence of every machination of the rebel directory. But the government had not the slightest desire to suppress the insurrection thus quietly. Their plan was to convulse the whole framework of society to its very centre ; to create mutual and thorough hatred and terror between the Protestant and Catholic inhabitants of the land ; to paralyze

* *Spirit of the Nation.*

both into a total incapacity to resist the Union ; to coerce both with an irresistible army of occupation ; and then, by means of unprecedented bribery, to corrupt the Parliament (which had already been dexterously packed) to vote its own extinction.

They must indeed have been short-sighted statesmen who calculated that a union thus produced by force and bribery could ever be maintained by any other means than force and bribery. They must have known but little of human nature, if they imagined that a people whose legislature had been made the subject of a regular bargain and sale, could ever acquiesce in that traffic.

Amongst the Irish parliamentary Unionists, the most prominent leader was Lord Chancellor Clare. His only motive was the hope of personal aggrandizement. He had, by his commanding talents and great strength of character, acquired a dictatorship in the Irish House of Lords. Over the imbecile puppets who formed the majority of that assembly, he domineered with the most insolent tyranny ; and he indulged in visions of the vastly enlarged power with which a dictatorship in the British parliament would invest him. It never occurred to him that he should not be equally as dominant

there as he was in the Upper House of the Irish Legislature.

Clare had a species of intellect not uncommon amongst the leaders of the French revolution, of which the leading trait was its strong but ill-directed energy. His bigotry against the Catholics was intense. In private society he seldom named them without some contemptuous epithet.

He threw all his abilities into the struggle for the Union ; and in order to give the reader some idea of the habitual insolence with which he bullied the Irish peers, I shall quote the following audacious attack made by him on the present Lord Charlemont, the Marquis of Downshire, and some other lords, who ventured to oppose the Union :—

“ If loud and confident report,” said Lord Clare, “ is to have credit, a consular exchequer has been opened for foul and undisguised bribery. I know that subscriptions are openly solicited in the streets of the metropolis, to a fund for defeating the measure of Union. I will not believe that the persons to whom I have been obliged to allude, can be privy to it. One of them, a noble earl,” (Charlemont,) “ I see in his place ; he is a very young man ; and I call upon him as he fears to have his entry into public life marked with dishonour ; I call upon him as he fears to live with

the broad mark of infamy on his forehead, and to transmit it indelibly to his posterity—to stand up in his place, and acquit himself before his peers of this foul imputation. I call upon him publicly to disavow all knowledge of the existence of such a fund ; or, if he cannot disavow it, to state explicitly any honest purpose to which it can be applied. If it can exist, I trust there are sufficient remains of sense and honour in the Irish nation to cut off the corrupted sources of these vile abominations."

In order properly to appreciate the brazen audacity of that insolent attack, it must be remembered that he who thus denounced the imputed iniquities of the patriotic party, was the champion of a government who were openly and shamelessly practising every art of corruption in favour of their measure.

The Union being carried, Lord Clare, who was inflated with arrogance and success, soon tried the experiment of insulting the peers of England. He called the Whig lords "Jacobins!"

The Duke of Bedford flung back the insult with the spirit that beseemed a British peer. "We would not," said he, "bear such language from our *equals*; far less will we endure it from the upstart pride of chance nobility." The feeling of the entire House was with the duke.

Clare had not the poor consolation of sympathy or pity from a single man of even his own political party. His influence, once almost omnipotent, was now extinct. He returned, mortified and broken-hearted, to the country he had betrayed and ruined ; cursing himself for the part he had taken in promoting the Union.

"There was a time," he said with great bitterness, "when no appointment could be made without my sanction. *Now I am unable to make so much as a clerk in the excise.*"

He tried to dissipate his chagrin by violent equestrian exercise. His death was hastened by a severe hurt he received whilst riding in the Phoenix Park. He died in 1803, expressing in his last hours his deep though unavailing remorse for his criminal co-operation with Pitt against the Irish constitution. His fall may be regarded as a signal instance of the retributive justice of Providence.

CHAPTER III.

How did they win this Union?
By perjury and fraud;
By slaves who sold for place or gold,
Their country and their God.

Spirit of the Nation.

A Scotch essayist on Irish politics once expressed his curiosity to know by what magic William Pitt induced the minor members of the Irish peerage to consent to the Union. The great lords who had influence in the House of Commons were brought over on intelligible principles. The Earl of Shannon, for example, was paid £45,000 for his adhesion. Besides, the chiefs of the peerage could look forward to seats in the imperial parliament as Irish representative peers, whereas the smaller lords in losing their Irish privilege of hereditary legislation, lost all that made their titles anything better than nicknames; whilst they had little or no chance of election to the central legislature.

It certainly *does* at first sight seem surprising that a considerable body of legislators should have quietly and courteously surrendered the proudest privilege of the citizen, and received for it no equivalent whatever. Our surprise however is diminished when we analyse the composition of the peers, and examine their habits.

Let us first do all honour to the gallant band who, headed by the Duke of Leinster and the Earl of Charlemont, resisted the Union to the last. The Lords' protest against the Union is a noble document, full of sagacity and patriotism. Alas ! those who signed it were comparatively few indeed.

With respect to the rest of the peers : if we look into the Irish peerage list, we shall find that more than half of those existing in 1800 had received their creations from the then reigning monarch, George the Third. Of these men, thus personally bound to the Court, a considerable number were indebted for their elevation to the grossest political dishonesty. They cared nothing for their country, except for the purpose of trafficking upon it. Corruption had been carried to such an extent as to justify Grattan's indignant complaint, that the Minister's familiar practice was to purchase the members of one house with the money obtained by selling seats in the other.

Again, a great portion of the Irish peers had nothing Irish about them but their titles. They had not a foot of property in the kingdom. They never entered it. They had no more compunction in voting for the extinction of the Irish parliament, than they would have had in voting away an Otaheitan legislature. Take up a Dublin

Almanack for the year 1800, and run your eye over the peerage list. You will find many of the peers possessing also English titles and English residences. Exclusively of these, you will find that out of fifty-seven viscounts, there were no less than eighteen who had got no Irish residence at all. Run your eye over the barons, and you will find that out of sixty-five, there were in that year no less than thirty-four whose connexions, residences, and property, were altogether English.

Again, some of the most bustling and prominent peers then residing in Ireland, were either English lawyers, or the sons of Englishmen who had been thrust upon the Irish bench, and thence into the Irish peerage. These men had not yet acquired Irish sentiments or feelings; they rejoiced in an opportunity to strike a blow at Ireland.

Amongst those whom a descent of some half dozen generations entitled to call themselves Irish, the greater number had so habitually looked on politics as a game to be played for the purpose of personal aggrandizement, that they had no conception at all of anything like political principle. There was a thorough moral recklessness about them, which rendered them quite ready for any act of political desperation, provided it

did not tend to enlarge the power of the people. Their personal habits necessarily fostered this recklessness. Their profusion and extravagance were boundless ; and some of them—not a few—resorted to modes of “ raising the wind,” which showed that they mingled but few scruples with their system of financial pneumatics ! There was withal a strong dash of odd drollery in the brazen shamelessness of their expedients.

A curious specimen of this order of men was Lord M*****y. His title was the result of some dexterous traffic in parliamentary votes. His manners were eminently fascinating, and his habits social. He had a favourite saying “that a gentleman could never live upon his rents : a man who depended on his rents had money upon only *two* days in the year, the 25th of March and the 29th of September.” He accordingly left no expedient untried to furnish himself with money on every other day too.

It chanced that when Lord Kerry’s house in Stephen’s-green was for sale, a lady named Keating was desirous to purchase a pew in Saint Anne’s church, appertaining to that mansion. Mrs. Keating erroneously took it into her head that the pew belonged to Lord M*****y ; she accordingly visited his lordship to propose herself as a purchaser.

"My dear madam," quoth he, "I have not got any pew that I know of in Saint Anne's Church."

"Oh, my lord, I assure you that you have; and if you have got no objection, I am desirous to purchase it."

Lord M*****y started no further difficulty. A large sum was accordingly fixed on, and in order to make her bargain as secure as possible, Mrs. Keating got the agreement of sale drawn out in the most stringent form by an attorney. She paid the money to Lord M*****y; and on the following Sunday she marched up to the pew to take possession, rustling in the stateliness of brocades and silks. The beadle refused to admit her into the pew.—"Sir," said the lady, "this pew is mine."—"Your's, madam?"—"Yes; I have bought it from Lord M*****y."—"Madam, this is the *Kerry* pew; I do assure you Lord M*****y never had a pew in this church." Mrs. Keating saw at once she had been cheated, and on the following day she went to his lordship to try if she could get back her money.

"My lord, I have come to you to say that the pew in Saint Anne's —"

"My dear madam," interrupted his lordship, "I'll sell you twenty more pews if you've any fancy for them."

"Oh, my lord, you are facetious ! I have come to acquaint you it was all a mistake ; you never had a pew in that church."

"Hah ! so I think I told you at first."

"And I trust, my lord," pursued Mrs. Keating, "you will refund me the money I paid you for it."

"The money ! Really, my dear madam, I am sorry to say that's quite impossible—the money's gone long ago."

"But—my lord—your lordship's character —"

"That's gone too!" said Lord M*****y, laughing with good humoured nonchalance. Mrs. Keating had no remedy.

I have already said, that this worthy nobleman's financial operations were systematically extended to every opportunity of gain that could possibly be grasped at. He was colonel of a militia regiment; and—contrary to all precedent—he regularly sold the commissions, and pocketed the money. The Lord Lieutenant resolved to call him to an account for his malpractices ; and for that purpose invited him to dine at the Castle, where all the other colonels of militia regiments then in Dublin, had also been invited to meet him. After dinner, the Viceroy stated that he had heard with great pain an accusation made—indeed he could hardly believe it !—but it had been positively said that the

colonel of a militia regiment actually sold the commissions ! The company looked aghast at this atrocity, and the innocent colonels forthwith began to exculpate themselves. “*I have never done so.*”—“*I have never sold any.*”—“*Nor I.*”—“*Nor I.*” The disclaimers were general. Lord M*****y resolved to put a bold face on the matter. “*I always sell the commissions in my regiment,*” said he, with the air of a man who announced a practice rather meritorious. All present seemed astonished at this frank avowal. “How can you defend such a practice?” asked the Lord Lieutenant. “Very easily, my lord. Has not your Excellency always told us to assimilate our regiments as much as possible to the troops of the line?” “Yes, undoubtedly.” “Well —*they sell the commissions in the line;* and I thought that the best point at which to begin the assimilation.”

We may well suppose that such a personage would have readily voted for the Union, or for anything else.

Mr. *****, a wealthy merchant, had aristocratic aspirings. Having amassed great wealth in trade, as well by lucky hits as by persevering industry, he resolved to add a peerage to his acquisitions. A bargain was made with the Irish minister; the ambitious merchant was to be created a baron for the stipulated payment of

£20,000. The patent was forthwith made out, and the new peer took his seat in due form. The government never entertained a doubt that his lordship would faithfully pay them the price of his new honours ; and in this happy confidence they gave him his coronet without first securing the money for it. Six months passed, during which the good folk at the Castle took it for granted that the new baron would fulfil his engagement at his earliest convenience. At length, however, the secretary wrote a “private and confidential” epistle, to give his lordship’s memory a gentle refresher.

The noble lord made short work of the matter. He wrote back, denying all recollection of the engagement referred to ; expressing great indignation that anybody should presume to accuse him of being a party to the sale or purchase of a peerage ; and threatening, should the claim be renewed, to impeach the minister in parliament for so grossly unconstitutional a proceeding. The government were outwitted, and the ex-merchant got his coronet—as he probably had got many a commodity besides—without paying for it.

Many such scamps were to be found in the Irish house of Lords ; and English lucubrators upon Irish affairs triumphantly point to their unprincipled conduct, and ask—as if the ques-

tion were perfectly conclusive against Repeal—
“Would you revive *such* a parliament?”*

No, certainly. We seek not to revive corruption. We desire to restore the Irish parliament, cleansed, purified, and placed beyond the reach of all corrupt influences. The unprincipled class, moreover, to whom Lord M*****y and Lord —— belonged, cannot in any fairness be quoted against Irish claims or Irish rights. That class was manufactured by England in this country. It was prevented by English power and English artifice from becoming identified with Irish interests. It was corrupted *for* English purposes, and *by* English influence. When England, therefore, upbraids us with its moral rottenness, we retort that SHE was the instigator to its political crimes—that those crimes were disastrous to the great mass of the Irish people, who had no participation whatsoever in them ; and that the disgrace, consequently, rests not on us ; but on England herself, and on the individual criminals who yielded to her seductions in this country.

* Amongst the aristocratic eccentricities of the day, was the Earl of Belvedere's *penchant* for people who had hideous noses. He used to give an annual entertainment called the “Nosey Dinner;” the guests being all persons remarkable for having large red noses. His lordship's great delight was to invite two opposite proprietors of outlandish noses to take wine with each other, and to watch the converging inclination of their hideous profiles.

It cannot be too often repeated, that if the Union struggle in the Irish parliament developed, on the one hand, the political depravity which England had laboured so hard to produce, it also displayed on the other hand many brilliant examples of the most stainless and unpurchaseable honesty. Every effort to debauch the legislature had for a series of years been systematically made by the government ; and yet in 1799 the first attempt to carry the Union was defeated by men who might have made for themselves whatever terms they pleased with the minister. And in 1800, after every possible exertion to pack the parliament had been resorted to, there yet remained a tried and trusty band, who, although in a minority, were yet miraculously numerous, when we remember the enormous powers of corruption which the government derived from the number of close boroughs and their other resources. The men who were returned by the people nearly all stood firm to their trust. The traitors were chiefly found amongst those whom private influence had introduced into the legislature. Out of doors there was a perfectly universal opposition to the Union, which would have been effectual if it were not for the overpowering military force in the hands of the government.

CHAPTER IV.

As we are men and Irishmen,
Scorn for his curst alliance !
As we are men and Irishmen,
Unto his throat defiance !

Banim.

The Union having been accomplished, the prevalent desire amongst the Irish people was, of course, to obtain its repeal.

For some years no great public effort was made for this purpose. The army of occupation, under the terror of which it had been forced upon Ireland, was still continued in the country.

But the national desire to obtain Repeal is coeval with the Union itself. It was not possible that a nation should sit quietly down in contented acquiescence in its own servitude. A sullen sentiment of enmity to England smouldered in the public mind. Men brooded angrily over the enormous crime the English Government had committed against their country; and they felt, (to use the language of SAURIN, an *Orange* opponent of the Union,) "that the exhibition of

resistance to the measure became merely a question of prudence."

Ere I pass to later periods, let me pause for one moment to notice a modern misrepresentation. It is frequently said that "the Catholics supported the Union."

They did no such thing. At a Catholic aggregate meeting held in Dublin in 1795, the Catholic leaders unanimously passed a resolution that they would not accept Emancipation on the terms of consenting to a Union. Imbued with this sentiment, O'Connell, in his maiden speech, delivered in 1800, declared that he would prefer the re-enactment of the whole penal code to the destruction of the Irish parliament. So notorious was the hatred of the Catholic body to the measure, that secretary Cooke, in a pamphlet recom-mendatory of the Union, consoled himself for their hostility by predicting that "the Catholics' dissatisfaction would sink into acquiescence, and acquiescence soften into content."

Nor were the Protestants more favourable to the Union than their Catholic brethren. There were numberless resolutions of grand juries, Orange guilds, and Orange lodges, denouncing the project in the strongest language. Saurin emphatically declared, "that although the Union might be made binding as a law, *it could never*

40 PROTESTANT OPPOSITION TO THE UNION.

become obligatory upon conscience ; and that resistance to it would be in the abstract a duty." Numbers of the Protestant-ascendancy party were inaccessible to the bribes of the minister. Sir Frederick Falkiner had four executions in his house at Abbotstown, on the very day on which he rejected with scorn a large offer of money from Lord Castlereagh— an instance of political virtue which deserves to be recorded to the honour of the high Tory baronet. There were numerous other instances of equally noble and disinterested patriotism amongst the leaders of Orangeism.

In truth, no Irishman supported the Union, unless he were actually bribed to do so.

The government had tried to delude both parties ; the Catholics, by holding out hopes of their emancipation from the imperial parliament ; the Protestants, by instilling into their minds a belief that the Union would render emancipation impossible. George the Third adopted this latter notion. In his published correspondence with Pitt, he tells that minister that he had consented to the Union in the full belief that it would "shut the door" for ever against the Catholic claims.

The Protestants, as being then the stronger party in Ireland, were deemed by the govern-

ment the best worth conciliating. Accordingly they were allowed to monopolize the control of the country, as the most effectual means of reconciling them to the Union. They had the castle, the courts, the public offices. They had everything. Yet this golden monopoly did not avail to extinguish altogether the national sentiment which had grown up under the influence of home-legislation.

Grattan—the illustrious leader of the Volunteer movement in 1782—retired on the enactment of the Union into private life, from which he did not emerge until 1805, when he was returned to the imperial parliament for the borough of Malton. On the first appearance of so distinguished an orator on the boards of St. Stephen's, there was necessarily great curiosity excited. There were, in his style of speaking, some marked peculiarities, and also in his voice some Hibernian inflections, which called forth an incipient titter of derision from certain of his Cockney auditors. These symptoms, however, were checked by Pitt, who nodded his approval of the style and manner of the speaker.

What a type of Ireland's degradation ! Her most honoured and venerable patriot exposed to the sneers of a brainless rabble ; and indebted for his exemption from gross insult, to the patroni-

zing approbation of the bitter and triumphant enemy of his country !

It was in the speech he then delivered that Grattan, in alluding to the fallen fortunes of Ireland, used the touching words, "I sat by her cradle ; I follow her hearse."

The Orange Corporation of Dublin were the first public body who bestirred themselves to procure a Repeal of the Union. They did so in 1810, and confided their petition to Grattan and Sir Robert Shaw, the father of the present Recorder of Dublin. Both these gentlemen promised to support the Repeal ; and Grattan emphatically said, that whenever the question should come before parliament " he would prove himself an Irishman ; and that Irishman whose first and last passion was his native country."

It is curious enough to hear modern Orange-men and Tories denouncing Repeal as being actual treason, when we remember that Repeal was first publicly mooted by the most ultra-Orange municipality in the kingdom. The example of Repeal agitation was first publicly given by that body whose anti-Catholic prejudices were so violent and inflexible, that it admitted only five Catholics to be freemen of the city of Dublin during the entire period of forty-eight years from 1793, when the Catholics became legally

admissible ; to 1841, when the Orange corporation was dissolved by the Municipal Reform Act.* Mr. Butt, a Dublin barrister, who is by no means destitute of talent, and who has obtained perhaps more than his due share of celebrity from the contrast he forms with his talentless political associates, once arraigned the Repealers as traitors, in a speech at the Rotunda. He apparently forgot that his ancient friends and clients, the Orange Corporation, should necessarily be involved in this censure. The "*treason*" of Repeal was long enshrined in the Orange sanctuary in William-street ; and many a true Orange knee was bent in that temple before the altar of the national divinity. Were Mr. Butt's worthy clients all traitors ?

In 1810 public meetings were held in sustainment of the Repeal, and in order to cheer on the corporation. George the Third became ill prior to his madness, and the loyal corporators abandoned their agitation, lest they should embarrass the royal invalid. In 1813 the Repeal cry was renewed in Dublin, and the Repeaters of all creeds

* To those who impute intolerance to the Catholics, the contrast between the old and the new corporations of Dublin will afford an instructive lesson. The Protestant corporation, for 48 years, would admit but 5 Catholic freemen ; whereas the Catholic corporation, during the 3 years of its existence, has twice elected a Protestant to the office of Lord Mayor.

held a meeting to promote their object. O'Connell, who had joined the movement in 1810, now again came forward, and exerted himself in conformity with the earliest declaration he ever had made of his political faith. In 1822, a Mr. Lucius Concannon gave notice in the House of Commons of a motion for the Repeal of the Union. Sir Robert (then Mr.) Peel inquired, "If the hon. gentleman could seriously ask the house to violate that solemn compact?" Just as if a measure which was literally forced upon Ireland at the point of the bayonet, could be rationally called a *compact*! From that period forward, the Repeal was constantly mooted in private society. In 1824, Lord Cloncurry wrote a letter, which was read by O'Connell at the Catholic Association, recommending the Catholics to abandon the struggle for emancipation, and to coalesce with the Protestants in a struggle for Repeal. But this advice was premature at that time. The Protestants of Ireland could not just then have been induced to combine with the Catholics for that or any other purpose. The demon of religious hatred was in the ascendant. Catholicity was familiarly designated "the beast," and "the accursed thing," from the Protestant pulpits; and the more bigoted Protestant preachers inculcated envenomed hostility to the creed of the Catholics as a christian

duty paramount to all others. When sectarian hate is incessantly enforced, it speedily is transferred from the *creed* of misbelievers to their *persons*. Those who recollect the exertions of the biblical party in 1824, 1825, and 1826, have reason to rejoice that their pernicious activity has been to a considerable extent relaxed.* The controversial excitement through the country was actually frightful. The Protestants were taught to look upon the religion of the Catholics

* Lord Farnham was a leading patron of these biblical exploits. One cannot help regarding with a feeling of melancholy interest, the curious scenes to which the system of patronizing proselytes from Popery gave rise. I knew more than one Protestant clergyman, remote from the head-quarters of religious excitement, who had been asked by distressed wretches, "*How much will I get from your reverence if I turn Protestant?*" The universal conviction on the minds of the lower order of Catholics, was, that nobody "turned" (as they called it) except for lucre; and that an enormous fund existed, under the control of the Protestant leaders, for buying up the religious belief of all Papists who were willing to conform. Weekly bulletins of the number of new converts from Popery, were placarded on the walls, and suspended round the necks of persons hired to perambulate the public streets. Fourteen hundred and eighty-three converts were at one period announced as the fruit of Lord Farnham's exertions in Cavan: but when Archbishop Magee went down to confirm them, their numbers had shrunk to forty-two. Lord Farnham was doubtless a sincere enthusiast; but his fanatical folly was excessive, and he was greatly imposed on. He kept open house for the crowds of proselytes, who were furnished with soup, potatoes, and in some instances with clothes. Pauper Protestants sometimes enjoyed his hospitality under the pretext of being "converts" from Popery; and such Catholics as thought they could escape recognition among the multitude of strange faces, contrived to be "con-

as a grand magazine of immorality, infidelity, and rebellion ; whilst the Catholics in their turn regarded their enthusiastic assailants as the victims of a spiritual insanity, derived from an infernal source, and as disastrous in its social results as it was bizarre in its exhibition. The kindly charities of friendship were annihilated ; ancient intimacies were broken up. Hatred was mitigated *only* by a sentiment of scornful compassion.

Such were the mutual feelings of the two great sections of the Irish community ; the one party having the immense preponderance in numbers ; the other in landed wealth. Plunket, the Attorney-General, had declared that “the cauldron was already boiling over in Ireland ; and that it was not requisite that the additional ingredient of a polemic contest should be thrown into it.”

The advice was wasted. Many motives impelled the biblical party to persevere. First of all, to do them every justice, there were some

“verted” three or four times over, in order to prolong the substantial advantage of being fed in a dear season at the noble lord’s cost. When the supply of food, &c., was discontinued, they returned to their former church.

This Lord Farnham had been a determined opponent of the Union in 1800 ; and not long before his death, he publicly declared at a Conservative meeting, that his hostility to Repeal arose from a religious, and not at all from a political motive. Alas ! Lord Farnham was not the only man in whom sectarian fanaticism spoiled a good patriot !

amongst their number who conscientiously believed that they were divinely commissioned to dispel the gross darkness of Popery. They were, as they conceived, authorised to walk forth, wielding "the sword of the spirit, which is the word of God," and with which they were destined to encounter and overcome their enemies. Then there were the political speculators, who looked on the strong theological excitement as affording a useful diversion of men's minds from the grievances of tithes and penal disqualifications, to the abstract topics of purgatory, transubstantiation, et cetera. Again, it was hoped and expected by others that the ceaseless abuse launched at Popery would disincline Protestants to become emancipators; and possibly withdraw from the Papists the political support of many who already had joined them.

It is probable that some of the liberal members of parliament, at that period, had but little sincerity in their emancipating zeal. The profession of liberal politics effected two things for them: it obtained for them an agreeable popularity, and also the honour of seats in parliament. Many of them voted for the Catholics year after year, entertaining (I verily believe) a full conviction that Emancipation never would be conceded. They thus enjoyed the cheap distinction of being senators on the easy terms of supporting

a measure for which they cherished no affection, but of whose defeat they indulged in a comforting certainty. How ludicrously disappointed must such men have been when Peel and Wellington wheeled round in 1829 !

Religious jealousy and sectarian distrust, like the poisonous exhalations of the Upas tree, blighted and withered the natural, the inborn sentiment of nationality in many a well-meaning man. When Lord Cloncurry, in the letter already alluded to, publicly advocated Repeal, a worthy Protestant country gentleman of my acquaintance, exclaimed that it would be an excellent thing if we had a Parliament of our own in Ireland. "But then," he added, "the Papists are so numerous they would soon get the upper hand." "I suppose," said I, "you mean the Catholics would be emancipated. Pray, what harm would their emancipation do you or me?" "We should have them for rivals in every thing," he immediately answered. "If a Papist was more eloquent, or a better lawyer than a Protestant, he might get the start of the Protestant in parliament, or he might be promoted to the bench, while the Protestant of inferior talent lost the race. *Now*, the Protestant *cannot* be beaten in the race, for the Papist cannot run. And that is an advantage we should not surrender on any account."

I mention this trifling incident because it illustrates the sort of jealous feeling which operated, not only to enlist Protestants against the Catholic claims, but also to smother their national spirit as Irishmen. The mischievous efficacy of this jealous terror will be more apparent when I add, that the gentleman in question had been a United Irishman in 1797. The early impression of even ultra-nationality was obliterated by the malign influence of sectarian partizanship. And yet there was no great bitterness, nor was there any personal hostility in his politics. He did not *hate* Catholics ; he was kind to them in his landlord-capacity ; but he had taken up the notion that their doctrine of "absolution" authorized crime. He had accurately expressed the sentiment that actuated thousands—a sturdy resolve to sustain the monopoly the Protestants had got ; not only to preserve a party-advantage, but from a belief that the spiritual merits of Protestantism entitled its possessors to that monopoly.

Meanwhile, O'Connell worked the Catholic question indefatigably. He was an inexhaustible declaimer, and astonishingly fertile in argument, in expedient, and in topics of excitement. There had been from the commencement of his career, this novel feature in his agitation—*there was*

nothing secret in it. No locked doors—no secret committees—no hidden springs—no machinery whatsoever to which he would not any moment have admitted the whole corps of government inspectors. Former political leaders had conceived that secrecy was indispensably necessary as a part of their system. But O'Connell early saw the perils of every scheme of which concealment formed a part. The very fact of supposing the proceedings of a junto secret, would necessarily operate as an inducement to ill-regulated spirits to give utterance to illegal or treasonable sentiments. There was the presumed protection of silence. Then there instantly arose the danger of treachery : any rascal who was sufficiently base to betray his associates—any Reynolds or Newell—might instantly compromise the safety of the entire association by revealing the indiscretion, or the illegality, or the treason, of a single member.

O'Connell's sagacity swept away all such danger at once. By resolving to hide nothing, his associates were sure to say and do nothing that required to be hidden.

His immediate predecessor as a Catholic leader was John Keogh, a Dublin merchant. Keogh was far advanced in years at the time when O'Connell first became very celebrated ; and it is

generally believed that the old leader felt jealous of the popular talents as well as of the influence acquired by the younger one. It is quite certain that he sought to persuade O'Connell that the Catholics, instead of continuing their agitation, should relapse into silence and inaction; and try the effect of regarding the Government with a surly, awe-inspiring frown, indicative of hostility too deeply rooted to petition or negotiate. Keogh, in fact, proposed and carried a resolution to that effect at a public meeting at which his rival attended. O'Connell proposed and carried a counter-resolution at the same meeting, which pledged the Catholics to unremitting activity.

Nothing could have gratified the Government more than the adoption by the Catholics of Keogh's advice. It would have released them from the annual parliamentary bore of the Catholic question. It would have retarded the success of that question incalculably. The notion of a whole people endeavouring to scare a hostile government by a grim and silent scowl, was rather too melo-dramatic to avail on the political stage!

O'Connell, of course, persevered. In 1813 he was called "an agitator with ulterior views." He immediately accepted the designation, and declared that the ulterior object he had in view was the Repeal of the Union. When urged at a

much later period to postpone the agitation of the Catholic claims to that of Repeal, he refused to comply ; assigning as his reason, that Emancipation, by removing one great subject of national difference, would facilitate the junction of all Irishmen to regain their legislative independence. O'Connell undoubtedly entertained at that time too favourable a notion of the patriotism of the Orange party. He did not anticipate the stubborn, inflexible, enduring Orange bigotry which has survived the emancipation of the Catholics, and thus outlived the chief pretext for its exercise. No doubt there were other pretexts too : there were the corporations and the church establishment ; the former have been taken from the Orangemen ; but the church remains ; and so long as a profitable and *exclusive* institution exists in Ireland, so long will the party who gain by its existence withhold their co-operation from the general mass of their countrymen.

John Keogh's belief of the utter inutility of agitation is instructive. Lord Fingal was latterly impressed with that belief, and alleged it as his reason for declining to preside at a Catholic meeting in Dublin. How often have I—how often have all whose memory extends back to the later years of the Catholic struggle—heard from all sides the exclamation—"Oh ! they never will

get Emancipation ! the government never will grant it ! *How* are the Catholics to frighten the government into concession ? O'Connell is wasting his time ! He has been haranguing for nearly thirty years, and has brought his dupes no nearer to it yet !" and so forth.

Thus do we hear the Repeal agitation at the present day denounced as a delusion, and in precisely similar language.

But, in truth, perseverance will secure success. How is it possible for any government finally to resist a measure which the full third part of the empire have resolved to obtain ; and which its advocates have an infinitely greater interest in obtaining, than any other party in the state can possibly have in withholding ? It is vitally important to the integrity of the empire in the event of foreign war, that Ireland should be the fast and firm friend of England. There is but one way of making her so ; and that is by the restoration of her stolen property ; her power of self-legislation ; in a word—by repealing the Union.

At the time when O'Connell became a member of the Catholic Committee, John Keogh, who had once been an active agitator, was past the prime of his energies ; and the natural jealousies incident to a rivalry for leadership produced their

necessary results in disorganization and weakness. O'Connell has been bitterly censured for having at that period quarreled with the Whig leaders; and a recent clever writer upbraids him with having in particular "laboured to make the venerable Grattan as unpopular as possible."

This accusation, when translated into the language of simple truth, merely means that Mr. O'Connell, with his characteristic sagacity, vigorously opposed every scheme of accompanying emancipation with measures in the slightest degree calculated to secularize the Catholic church, or to bind up the priests in the trammels of the state. Grattan would have taken emancipation though encumbered with the "veto;" and although a Roman Catholic may condemn such a policy, yet he scarcely can blame Grattan for adopting it. Grattan was a Protestant, and of course could not fairly be expected to possess the watchful solicitude for the purity and independence of Catholic spiritualities which should animate an ardent Catholic, burning at once with zeal for the religious interests of his church, and ardour for the political freedom of his countrymen. That O'Connell should, with true moral courage, have opposed himself on such a question to a man so deservedly revered and loved by Irishmen as Henry Grattan, does in fact invest him

with an additional claim to the gratitude and admiration of every Catholic in the empire. In truth, the *only* point on which O'Connell differed from Grattan was the question of the veto.

Amongst the Catholic leaders who conceived that emancipation should be purchased at the expense of handing over to the government the appointment of the Catholic bishops under the name of a veto, was the late Chief Baron Wolfe, then a very rising barrister on the Munster circuit. He came into collision on this subject with O'Connell at a public meeting held in a chapel in Limerick, and made a powerful and effective speech from the front of the gallery in favour of the veto. O'Connell, in reply, told the story of the sheep who were thriving under the protection of their dogs, when an address, recommending them to get rid of their dogs, was presented by the *wolves*. He said that the leading *Wolfe* came forward to the front of the gallery, and persuaded the sheep to give up their dogs ; that they obeyed him, and were instantly devoured ; and he then expressed a hope that the Catholics of Ireland would be warned by so impressive an example against the insidious advice of any *Wolfe* who might try to seduce them to give up their proved and faithful guides and protectors. The hit was received with roars of applause, and the vetoists were routed.

That enslavement of the Irish Catholic Church to the state which the veto would have accomplished, has at a recent period been eagerly sought through the medium of state-payment for the priesthood. The Irish hierarchy rejected, unanimously and indignantly, the insidious pensioning scheme ; conscious that the smallest cession of their present independence on the state would fatally compromise the purity of their religion, and the public morality and peace.

If the clergy of the Irish people became the paid officers of the Englsih government, they would utterly and finally forfeit the confidence of their flocks. One shudders to contemplate the scenes of anarchy and irreligion which would follow from such a loosing of the bands which now unite the people and their pastors. In the sound sense, the honesty, and the Christian faithfulness of the priesthood, we have happily a full security against such a terrible result. They cannot be bribed away from Irish interests.

CHAPTER V.

"I think the character of the Irish Protestants not radically bad; on the contrary they have a reasonable share of good nature. If they could be once got to think the Catholics were human creatures, and that they lost no job by thinking them such, I am convinced they would soon, very soon indeed, be led to show some regard for their country."—*Edmond Burke*.

It must often have sorely galled the Catholic leaders to encounter the patronizing condescension of self-important Protestant nobodies, who took airs of protection and arrogated high consideration in virtue of being emancipators. Prompt payment in servility was expected for the assuasive courtesies which seemed to claim a measureless superiority over the Catholic protégés on whom they were bestowed. "We have now shaken off our chains," said Sheil, *after* emancipation; "and one of the chief blessings of freedom is our release from petty and contemptible political patronage. If a Protestant vouchsafed to be present at any of our meetings, it was, 'Hurrah for the Protestant gentleman! three cheers for the Protestant gentleman! a

chair for the Protestant gentleman!' And this subserviency, readily tendered by some, was, perhaps, the most provoking small nuisance of our grievances."

A species of humiliating advocacy consisted in alleging that although the religion of the Papists was damnable, idolatrous, diabolical, degrading, et cetera ; yet its wretched votaries might be safely admitted to political equality ; inasmuch as the preponderating Protestant strength of the empire would always avail to counteract any mischief that might be devised by the Papists. Nay, emancipation might possibly be instrumental in converting the Papists to a purer faith ; inasmuch as their penal disqualifications rendered perseverance in Popery a point of honour with its professors ; whereas admission to equality of privilege would remove the suspicion which might otherwise attach to their motives in conforming to Protestantism.

Amongst the parliamentary advocates of emancipation who took the occasion of supporting the Catholic claims to vituperate Popery, was Mr. Perceval. He delivered a speech in which the ultra-virulent abuse of Catholicity was only to be equalled by the language of some spouter of Exeter Hall on an anti-Popery field-day ; at the same time recommending the repeal of all dis-

qualifying laws, as conducive to the religious enlightenment of the Catholics.

Another of the politicians who combined patronage with insult, was the statesman immortalized in D’Israeli’s Coningsby under the pseudonym of “ NICHOLAS RIGBY;” a dexterous and lucky adventurer, of whose career a few brief incidents may not be uninteresting.

RIGBY’s father resided in the neighbourhood of Dublin for the purpose of giving his son a college education. The young gentleman, whose critical taste was early on the outlook for subjects to dissect, published a metrical satire on the corps dramatique of the Theatre Royal, as it existed under the management of Mr. Frederick Jones. This production saw the light in 1804, and was entitled, “ Familiar Epistles to Frederick Jones, Esq.” The authorship was not avowed until after the work had passed through two editions. The versification was easy and correct; the personal sketches flippant and piquant; the *text*, in short, was good of its kind, but the notes which encumbered every page were of leaden dulness; which quality was rendered the more striking by the perpetual and clumsy attempts of the author to be pointed and brilliant. In truth, the dreary and ponderous pleasantries of RIGBY’s notes, irresistibly reminded the

reader of the stupid German commemorated by Boswell, who, being charmed by the exuberant animal spirits of some humourist, endeavoured when alone to emulate his friend's vivacity by jumping over the tables and chairs; explaining the purpose of this saltatory exercise to an acquaintance who surprised him in the midst of his antics, by saying, "*J'apprends d' etre vif.*" RIGBY's prosaic efforts to be *vif* were desperately hopeless and clumsy. But there was really a great deal of pungent sarcasm in his verses.*

* e. g.—The sketch of Richard Jones :—

"But who is this, all boots and breeches,
Cravat and cape, and spurs and switches,
Grin and grimace, and shrugs and capers,
And affectation, spleen, and vapours?
Oh, Mr. Richard Jones, your humble!
Prithee give o'er to mouth and mumble;
Stand still—speak plain! and let us hear
What was intended for the ear:
For, faith! without the timely aid
Of bills, no parts you've ever play'd."

Another sketch :—

"Next Williams comes, the rude and rough,
With face most whimsically gruff,
Aping the careless sons of ocean,
He scorns each fine and easy motion,
Tight to his sides his elbows pins,
And dabbles with his hands like fins;
Would he display the greatest woe,
He slaps his breast and points his toe;
Is merriment to be expressed?
He points his toe and slaps his breast!"

The amusing personalities of the "Familiar Epistles" rendered the book exceedingly popular in Dublin, and a good deal of interest was excited to discover the writer. So long as the epistles were anonymous, several of the small literati acquired a transient importance from imputations of the authorship; imputations which most of them encouraged. But at length the real poet came forth to claim his laurels; and **MR. NICHOLAS RIGBY** immediately began to lionize on the strength of his epistolary glories.

Literary countesses asked him to their assemblies—dinner-giving dilettanti invited to their tables the young satirist whose opening rhymes had exhibited so just an appreciation of the scientific *gourmandise* of Frederick Jones. The "Familiar Epistles" soon rendered their author more familiar with champagne and turtle-soup than he ever had been.

One of the personages who bestowed their attentions on young **RIGBY**, was the late eccentric

His turns are swings, his step a jump,
His feelings fits,—his touch a thump;
And violent in all his parts,
He speaks by gusts, and moves by starts."

There was a great deal in the book equally good with the above extracts. It is matter of surprise that he who could write such piquant rhymes, should have failed so grievously in the prose notes!

Baron Smith, father to the present Attorney-General for Ireland. The learned Baron declared that RIGBY's sportive rhymes possessed Horatian vigour and brilliancy; he eagerly procured an introduction to the writer, and affectionately invited him to his country-seat.

The Baron was proverbial for his oddity. Possessed of one of the most acute and metaphysical minds of the period,* his great intellectual powers were often distorted by unaccountable caprice. One of his "amiable weaknesses" appeared in his sudden attachments and dislikes; the lightning rapidity with which he could adopt and discard an acquaintance. He would ask you to spend a month at his house with the most earnest and even affectionate cordiality. If you accepted the invitation and seemed disposed to take your host at his word,—lo! ere the third day ended you would probably receive a very unequivocal hint that the sooner you levanted the better!

He tried the experiment on RIGBY. He asked

* The Baron was a zealous and very able Unionist. When I was a boy of twelve or thirteen years old, I have often spent hours over his dexterous and plausible defence of the Union; lost in astonishment at the ingenuity which could set up so imposing a case for so totally indefensible a measure. As a judge he was humane, considerate, and patient; rare virtues on the bench at that time!

him to stay for a month. RIGBY accepted the Baron's hospitality, and was received with the blandest courtesy. For the first two days everything was *couleur de rose*. The Baron was enchanting—his guest was delighted with his condescension ; RIGBY was introduced to the company who filled the house, as a young gentleman of extraordinary genius, and his host's most particular friend.

On the third day things were changed. The Baron scarcely deigned to glance in the direction of RIGBY. Or, if he *did* look towards the place where he sat, it was with that wandering gaze that seems totally unconscious of the presence of its object. RIGBY stood his ground unmoved. He, on his part, seemed totally unconscious of any alteration in the manner of the Baron ! He rattled away, apparently quite at his ease ; lavished all his stores of small-talk on the company, who declared that his spirits were delightful ! exhilarating ! At dinner the Baron did not address a sentence to him ; treated him with marked and supercilious coldness ; and indicated by the mute eloquence of manner that RIGBY had exhausted his welcome.

Next day RIGBY took his usual place at the breakfast table ; conversed with charming animation ; and wore the appearance of a man so

well satisfied with his quarters that he had not the least notion of changing them.

The Baron, finding that silence had no effect in dislodging his pertinacious guest, resolved at last to speak out. Meeting him alone in some part of the domain soon after breakfast, he thus addressed him :—

“ I had hoped, Mr. RIGBY, that you would have spared me the pain of telling you what I think my manner sufficiently indicated—that your visit is no longer agreeable. Is it possible you cannot have discovered this ? ”

“ Of course I *did* discover it ! ” returned RIGBY. “ You do not suppose me such a fool as not to have perceived that you became capriciously rude—from what cause I am totally unable to guess. But this I know—that you invited me to stay for a month, and for a month I *will* stay. *Your* station in the world is fixed, but *mine* is not. Before I quitted Dublin I boasted among all my acquaintance of the flattering invitation you gave me. I told them I was going to spend a month with you. If I returned at the end of a few days I should be their laughing-stock ; my social position would be seriously damaged, and my prospects would be more or less injured. No, no. You certainly cannot be serious, Baron, in the intention of converting your kindness into a source of mischief to me.”

These words, spoken in a tone of civil, but resolute impudence, tickled the Baron's fancy ; he saw that his guest was no every-day character ; and being an admirer of originality, he broke into a good-humoured fit of laughter, and permitted RIGBY to remain until the month was expired.

The anecdote is exceedingly characteristic of the energetic perseverance which has marked through life the indefatigable politician deservedly celebrated in D'Israeli's novel as "the Right Honourable Nicholas Rigby."

RIGBY's next adventure of importance was his return to Parliament. There was an election for the borough of Downpatrick. The contest was expected to be very close. One of the candidates was detained by an accident ; and his friends, in order to prevent his rival from getting a-head of him, set up RIGBY (who happened to be in the town) as a stalking-horse. RIGBY was proposed and seconded—harangued the electors against time—a poll was demanded, and *one* vote was given ; which, with the votes of his proposer and seconder, gave him *three* of the sweet voices of the electors of Downpatrick. Just at this stage of the proceedings, the *bona fide* candidate arrived. RIGBY retired from the hustings, but made no formal resignation of

his claims. Fierce waged the contest ! there was on both sides a tremendous expenditure of bribery. The election ended in the triumph of the man who bribed the highest ; and in due course of time his antagonist petitioned against his return. The sitting member was unseated for gross and corrupt bribery ; but the petitioner was not seated ; for bribery to a great extent was clearly proved to have been committed by *him* also.

There had been, however, a *third* candidate, who had committed no bribery ; a candidate who had got *three votes*. The committee accordingly reported that "NICHOLAS RIGBY, Esquire," had been duly returned for the borough of Downpatrick !

This decision astonished the public, who had looked on RIGBY's standing for the borough as a mere electioneering ruse ; and who in fact had quite forgotten the circumstance in the interest excited by the more important candidates.

Here was a frolic of fortune ! It is not every day that senatorial honours are flung at men's heads, and RIGBY determined on making the most of his sudden and unlooked-for elevation. The gentleman as whose *locum tenens* he had been originally proposed to the electors, wrote him a very friendly letter, requesting he would

resign his seat, as the writer wished to offer himself again for the borough. But RIGBY resolved upon keeping what he had got, and assured his friend that he could not, in justice to his constituents, or consistently with his sacred duty to the country, resign the important trust which the electors had kindly confided to his hands !

Our hero, in the year 1808, published a pamphlet entitled "A Sketch of the state of Ireland, past and present," in which he bestowed a description of contemptuous advocacy on the Catholic claims. His arguments went to support emancipation on the ground of its being too insignificant a boon to be worth refusing. He styled it "an almost empty privilege." He held the opinion that emancipation would facilitate conversions to Protestantism :

"Trade, when free, finds its level. So will religion. The majority will no more persist—when it is not a point of *honour* to do so—in the worse faith, than it would in the worse trade. Councils decide that the confession of Augsburg is heresy, and parliaments vote that Popery is superstition, and both impotently. No man will ever be converted, when his religion is also his party. But expedient as Catholic emancipation is, *I think it only expedient*, and concede it *not* without the following conditions."

He then enumerated four conditions, of which the most important were the payment of the priesthood by the state; the approval of the prelates by the crown; and the disfranchisement of the forty shilling freeholders. Curious timidity, that sought these protective conditions in return for conceding "*an almost empty privilege!*"

It is creditable to our hero that in his "Sketch of the state of Ireland" he has anticipated the aphorism which acquired for the late Under-Secretary Drummond such extensive popularity.

"A landlord," said RIGBY, "is not a mere land merchant; he has duties to perform as well as rents to receive; and from his neglect of the former spring his difficulty in the latter, and the general misery and distraction of the country. The combinations of the peasantry against this short-sighted monopoly, are natural and fatal."

Candidly and boldly expressed. This evidence, from such a quarter, is worth something. RIGBY had previously given an accurate description of the rack-rent system.

He, however, took care to insult the objects of his advocacy:

"The peasantry of Ireland are generally of the Roman Catholic religion, but utterly and disgracefully ignorant; few among them can

read, fewer write." (Thanks to the Protestant code that had made their education penal—but our author does not tell us so. He goes on :) "The Irish language, a barbarous jargon, is generally, and in some districts exclusively spoken; and with it are retained customs and superstitions as barbarous. Popish legends and Pagan tradition are confounded and revered." He elsewhere calls the people "utterly dark and blind."

Such advocacy as RIGBY's was rather too uncivil to be very acceptable to the Catholics. But this sort of insolent patronage was merely symptomatic of the general Protestant feeling of contempt for Papists which has already been noticed.* In truth, this was to some extent the fault of the Catholics themselves. I have seen a Catholic family of highly respectable station, seize with a servile alacrity the proffered acquaintance of Protestant neighbours who were in no respect their superiors. Various similar instances have been consistent with my knowledge. I have known a Protestant lady of fashion—very angry with a female friend for introducing

* I once asked a noble lord, (the son of a union peer,) whether any of his relations were Catholics? "Oh, none," he replied, "except the bastards!"

her to some ineligible acquaintance—exclaim that she would avenge the affront by inviting the parish priest to meet the offending fair one at her house ! This mode of punishing an affront by inflicting the parish priest on the offender, was thoroughly expressive of the Protestant estimate of Catholic society.

Without disparaging the Catholic gentry, it must be owned that as a class they were greatly inferior to the Protestants in all the refinements of polished life. Exceptions, no doubt, there were ; but such was the general fact. The penal laws were the cause of this inferiority. It is uttering an obvious truism to say that the exclusive possession of power, official dignity, and political station, must necessarily have imparted to the habits and manners of the favoured class all the social ease which results from the consciousness of command. Their peculiar advantages placed within their reach every facility of refinement. Their monopoly of so many other valuable things gave them almost a monopoly of civilization. It was a proverb, even so late as the first quarter of the present century, “that you might know a Catholic in the street by his crouching appearance.” The iron of the penal laws had entered into the souls of the people, and branded their manners with the strong marks of their inferiority. The *subservient* spirit has long since

passed away ; but I am not quite sure that in other respects Catholic society has yet fully acquired the polish which, from the causes already specified, is to be found amongst the upper classes of Protestants.

On the other hand, there is no vulgarity so odious, so offensive, so pestilent, as that of the Orange squireen. It is the ingrained vulgarity of mind, of soul, of sentiment. It is the loathsome emanation of " malice, hatred, all uncharitableness," in all its coarseness and deformity, unchecked and unconcealed by the conventional amenities of civilized life.

"Desipit exemplar imitabile vitiis."

The squireen class could imitate the bigotry of their betters, but they could not imitate the graces of manner which occasionally invested the aristocratic bigot with something of a chivalrous and dignified air.

The Irish noblesse and leading gentry of the last century lived magnificently. The edifices they erected both in town and country—the scale of their household establishments—their equipages—were magnificent. In their manners there was *l'air grand*; their very rascality was of magnificent dimensions. There was no paltry peddling about them. You could hardly have found one of them capable of selling himself, like

the Scotch Lord Bamf, for the petty trifte of eleven guineas. The *abandon*—the *laissez aller* principle was carried amongst them to the greatest extent compatible with social politeness.

Whatever was bad, bigoted, or unnatural in the aristocracy, was duly adopted and improved upon by their industrious imitators, the small squires. Whatever tended to mitigate the evils of bigotry was beyond the imitation of the squireen class, because it was beyond their comprehension. How deeply are the Catholics of Ireland indebted to O'Connell, for removing all the galling indignities entailed on them by their political inferiority to such a thoroughly contemptible class !

An amusing volume might be written on the exploits of the Orange squires of Ireland.

Vulgarity of soul was of course often found among the possessors of thousands a year, as well as of hundreds. The squireen magistracy were a curious generation. While the smaller sort of justices occasionally rendered their judicial decisions auxiliary to the replenishing of their poultry yards, those whose wealth gave them greater weight, were in frequent communication with the Castle, recommending “strong measures” to keep down the people ; such as the increase of the constabulary or military force ; the proclaim-

ing of disturbed districts; the enforcement of the insurrection act; or the suspension of the habeas corpus.

Complaints against obnoxious individuals were frequently made in these communications. The government were ear-wigged by the "loyalists," as the oppressors of the people thought proper to term themselves; and many a poor devil who never dreamt of plots or conspiracies, has been indicated to the executive as the secret contriver of a revolution!

One ludicrous instance of this species of volunteer espionage is deserving of record. The officious informant of the government flew at higher game than ordinary. He was a magistrate, a grand-juror, a man of family and fortune. The object of his attack was also a magistrate and grand-juror, and of lineage and station at least equal to his own. They were both "good loyalists;" the former gentleman amused his leisure hours with a corps of cavalry-yeomanry, of which he was the captain, and which he proclaimed was perfectly indispensable to the stability of British connexion.

These dignitaries quarreled with each other. It was a private dispute—I forget its nature; perhaps it concerned the comparative merits of their fox hounds. The "accusing angel" (whom

I shall call Mr. A.) conceived that the most exquisite revenge he could take would be to procure the dismissal of his foe (Mr. B.) from the commission of the peace.

Mr. A. was in constant communication with the government. Every week he wrote a voluminous letter to the viceroy or his secretary, expatiating on the demoniac disposition of the people; on the perpetual perils besetting the well-affected; and in especial on his own transcendent and incalculable merits. The literary qualities of his correspondence must have astonished the official critics at Dublin Castle, for his orthography was perfectly original, and he occasionally introduced a colloquial oath, by way of giving additional emphasis to his assertions.

His despatches, announcing to the government, that “by * * * the country was in a truely aweful situation”—that “they ought to look sharpe after Mr. Murtogh O’Guggerty,” &c. &c., had so invariably been attended to and acted upon, that at last he had very naturally learned to consider himself all-powerful with the Irish administration. His correspondence had been always “private and confidential;” so that he reveled in the double confidence of power and secresy.

He accordingly wrote to apprise the Lord Lieutenant that Mr. B. was a political hypocrite,

who, while wearing the outward marks and tokens of loyalty, was destitute of its inward and spiritual graces ; that, in fact, he was secretly a *Captain of Whiteboys* ; a most dangerous character ; and one who ought promptly be struck off the list of magistrates. Mr. A. did not entertain a doubt that the return of the post would bring with it a supersedeas for his enemy from the Lord Chancellor ; and he chuckled with anticipated ecstasy over B.'s mortification, and his ignorance of the quarter whence the arrow was aimed.

Although they had quarreled, yet they had not quite discontinued their acquaintance. Mr. A., therefore, was not *very* much astonished when he saw Mr. B. one fine morning approaching his house on horseback. "Perhaps," thought he, "B. is coming here to make up matters if he can—I wonder has he heard of his dismissal yet?"

The visitor, seeing the man of the house on his hall-door steps, struck spurs in his horse, reached the mansion in a few moments, sprung from the saddle, and ferociously shaking a horse-whip in one hand, presented with the other a written paper, saying :

"There, Sir, is the copy of a document signed with *your* name, which I have received from

Dublin Castle by this morning's post. It foully and falsely accuses me of being a Captain of Whiteboys, and demands my dismissal from the magistracy. I have come to know whether *you* are the author of this rascally document ?"

Mr. A. was so thunder-stricken at the suddenness, the total unexpectedness of such an accusation, that he was perfectly at a loss what to answer. He stammered out an admission that he had written the letter.

"Then," said B., "walk into the house this instant, and write a contradiction of it, which *I* shall dictate."

"Certainly, certainly," said A. mechanically obeying ; "by *** , my dear fellow, I always like to do what's honest and fair—fair and honest, my dear fellow ! Come in, come in ! Sit down, sit down ! I am always ready to oblige a friend !"

B. immediately dictated a very full and unqualified contradiction, which A. duly wrote ; and of which, the instant it was written, B. took possession. He then quitted the house without the ceremony of taking leave, despite the pressing reclamations of its master, who kept shouting after him to come back and take a hit at backgammon, until he was almost out of hearing ! What a character to be entrusted with the dis-

tribution of justice from the magisterial bench, and with the preservation of the peace of the country !

The incident is not forgotten of the juror who, at the Cork assizes, presented to the court in the character of foreman, the verdict of "guilty," which he had spelt "gilty!"

"That's badly spelt," said the counsel for the defence, who was near the box, and seized the paper *in transitu*.

"How shall I mend it?" enquired the worthy foreman, abashed and confused at this public censure.

"Put *n, o, t*, before it," returned the counsel, handing back the paper for the amendment, which the foreman immediately made in bewildered unconsciousness of the important nature of the change.

"There, that'll do!" said the counsel, taking the amended document, and handing up "*not guilty*" to the court. A fortunate interposition! The juror in question had a mania for hanging everybody. He had, in his impetuous haste, handed in the issue paper without consulting his brethren of the jury box. But if the prisoner, in that instance, was preserved from death, in how many instances were the miserable victims sacrificed? A verdict of "guilty" was a very easy affair

with jurors taken from a class who deemed accusation sufficient to establish criminality; and with whom the received policy was that of hanging the accused "*to make an example, and to preserve the quiet of the country.*

CHAPTER VI.

"A man he was to all the country *dear.*"

Goldsmith.

There occurred, in 1816, an incident strikingly illustrative of the Protestant-ascendancy policy of "making examples to preserve the quiet of the country."

The gentleman who officiated as peace-preserver on the occasion to which I now allude, was the Reverend John Hamilton, Protestant Curate of Roscrea, in the King's County, and a magistrate. The reverend gentleman had been transplanted to Roscrea from the county Fermanagh. In politics he was an enthusiastic Orangeman. His personal disposition appears to have been somewhat romantic and adventurous.

Mr. Hamilton, on receiving his appointment to the magistracy, promised (as he afterwards boasted) to distinguish himself by his *zeal* in discharging the duties of his office. He speedily

set about redeeming his promise. The Monaghan militia, commanded by Colonel Kerr, were at that time quartered in Roscrea. They were all of red hot Orange principles ; and it was the familiar practice of the reverend gentleman to obtain from the commanding officer parties of the men, who scoured the country, firing shots, playing party tunes, and thus exhibiting their ardent loyalty in a sort of irregular ovation of perpetual recurrence.

But these triumphant *feux de joie*, and the accompanying martial music, however agreeable as a pastime, could not long furnish serious occupation to so adventurous a spirit as that of the Reverend John Hamilton.

There resided at Roscrea two highly respectable Catholic distillers, the Messieurs Daniel and Stephen Egan.

There was also in Roscrea a rival distiller named Birch, a wealthy Protestant, in whose family the reverend gentleman had officiated as tutor for some time after his advent to the town.

It occurred to Mr. Hamilton, J.P., to evince his magisterial “zeal” by implicating the Messieurs Egan in a criminal conspiracy to murder the Protestant gentry of the neighbourhood. He was bustling, active, and artful ; and finding in many of his neighbours the ready credulity of

prejudice, he soon succeeded in creating a serious alarm in their minds. He procured the aid of a confederate, named Dyer, who was stable-man to Mr. Birch; (the reverend gentleman's patron) ; and Dyer, being duly drilled by Mr. Hamilton, swore informations bearing that several persons engaged in the murderous conspiracy aforesaid, occasionally rendezvoused in a valley called "the cockpit," situated in the domain of the Hon. Francis Aldborough Prittie, M.P., for the purpose of concocting their organization, and also of practising the manœuvres of military exercise.

Matters were not yet quite ripe enough to explode the plot against the Egan family. An assistant for Dyer was procured from Dublin, a dexterous practitioner in "informations," named Halfpenny, alias Halpin. He was then in the police, an attaché of Major Sirr's office. He had in 1798 displayed great activity as an informer.

On this man's arrival at Roscrea, he was forthwith taken into the councils of the Reverend Mr. Hamilton.

That reverend gentleman, his wife, and Halpin, dressed up a straw figure in a suit of Mr. Hamilton's clothes. They placed this figure in a sitting attitude at a table in a parlour, on the ground floor of Mr. Hamilton's house; its back was turned towards the window; on the table before it was

expanded a large bible ; a pair of candles stood upon the table. From without, the appearance of this pantomime was precisely that of the reverend pastor of Roscrea, deeply immersed in the study of the word of God. The scenic illusion in the parlour being thus prepared, the reverend gentleman furnished a pistol to Halpin, who, with Dyer, had received his instructions to fire through the window at the stuffed figure. A man named Quinlan was inveigled to join the shooting-party. Dyer and Halpin, obedient to Mr. Hamilton's injunctions, fired through the sash at the reverend gentleman's straw representative ; the window shutters having been left open for the purpose. The figure was hit in the back with a bullet ; the bible was dislodged ; two bullets struck the opposite wall.

Dire was the commotion that forthwith prevailed through the town ! In an instant the shout rang from mouth to mouth that the excellent pastor had been fired at while studying the bible ! He had escaped—hurrah !—by the special interposition of Providence. His preservation was doubtless miraculous ; but who could say that the same overruling care would be vouchsafed to the other Protestant inhabitants, whose lives were all equally menaced by the Popish conspiracy which had thus been merci-

fully baulked of its first intended victim ? The Protestants clearly must defend themselves.

The drums beat to arms. Parties of the Monaghan militia paraded the streets. In half an hour the Messieurs Egan, who were quietly sitting with some friends, were arrested by a picquet, and conveyed to the guard-house, where they were detained for the whole night on a charge of conspiring to murder the Reverend Mr. Hamilton. These events all took place on the night of the 28th of December, 1815.

Next morning the two Egans were bailed out with great difficulty by the strenuous exertions of their friends. For some days a calm succeeded, interrupted only by the occasional nocturnal visits of Mr. Hamilton and the police to Mr. Egan's house, under pretext of searching for arms.

It was surmised—I pretend not to say with what truth—that the government felt rather disinclined to follow up the prosecution, in consequence of the excellent character always borne by the parties accused. But Lord Norbury and the Earl of Rosse so vehemently urged the prosecution, that the scruples—if any—of the government, were overruled. A fresh witness to sustain the accusation was procured in the person of one Hickey, brother-in-law of the first witness, Dyer.

Meanwhile, the rampant delight of the Orange inhabitants of Roscrea was evinced in the most noisy and extravagant manner. Colonel Kerr was an active partizan of the Reverend Mr. Hamilton. He permitted the tattoo to be beaten through the town every evening, the drums being followed by a large military escort, at whose head the reverend gentleman ostentatiously strutted, arrayed in an orange cloak, and wearing round his waist a belt studded with pistols. This melodramatic exhibition was enlivened with such tunes as "Boyne Water," and "Protestant Boys," played on the military fifes.

On the morning following the attack on the stuffed figure, the Hon. Mr. Prittie visited the Rev. Mr. Hamilton to inquire the particulars, and asked him whether his (Mr. H's) son had not had a great escape? "Yes, Sir," replied Mr. Hamilton. "*Where were you sitting?*" demanded Mr. Prittie, "*when the shot was fired at you?*" "*There, Sir,*" answered Mr. Hamilton, pointing to a table in the room. Mr. Hamilton thus sought to confirm Mr. Prittie in the belief which Mr. P. had, in common with the public, then adopted, *that the shot had been actually fired at himself!* This attempt at deception should be carefully borne in mind, inasmuch as it neutralizes the defence which the reverend gentleman set up for his conduct at a subsequent stage of the affair.

On the 11th of January, 1816, the Messieurs Egan were arrested under a warrant of the Rev. Mr. Hamilton's. They were placed in the custody of a party of soldiers, and marched to the inn, where they found some eight or ten persons in custody, on the charge of being also involved in the murderous "conspiracy." The last named parties were confined for the night in the guard-room.

At ten o'clock on the following forenoon, all the prisoners set out to Clonmel, which was forty miles distant, escorted by a large body of military and police. The Egans travelled in a chaise which proceeded at a foot pace; the other prisoners walked hand-cuffed after the carriage. The first day's journey was to Templemore. It was rendered extremely fatiguing by the slowness of the pace and the inclemency of the weather. The rain poured down in torrents, and the prisoners on arriving at Templemore were conducted to a miserable den without a fire-place, appropriately named "the black-hole," in which they would have spent the night but for the humane interposition of Sir John Carden, who obtained for them the accommodation of the inn.

Next day they proceeded to Cashel, where they were consigned to a small, damp, dreary apartment, without any sort of furniture. They ap-

plied for permission to occupy the inn, but met a refusal on the plea that "the disturbed state of the country" would render compliance dangerous. It was, however, resolved to forward them at once to Clonmel.

A curious incident occurred within a few miles of the latter town. Two of the escort appeared to quarrel with each other, and in the course of the dispute, they fell from their horses. The steeds, released from their riders, ran away, and the whole escort, with the exception of a single policeman, made off in pursuit of them. The solitary guard approached the Egans, and strenuously urged them to escape. "I will follow my comrades," said he, "in pursuit of the runaway horses, and you can then act as you please." But the prisoners, apprehensive of some trick, rejected the advice thus urgently offered, and quietly awaited the return of the party of police.

Arrived at Clonmel, they were met in the jail by the Rev. Mr. Hamilton and Mr. Corker Wright,* a magistrate, who had zealously inter-

* This Mr. Corker Wright's house, near Shinrone, was the scene of a bloody tragedy in 1815. A party had been got up to attack the house; it is supposed with his knowledge, and arranged by his steward, Hoey. At all events the plan was fully known before it was acted upon, for a party of soldiers were in the house awaiting the assailants, in company with whom it is alleged that they marched for

ested himself in the prosecution. Mr. Wright, on the following morning, visited the prisoners, affected great friendliness, and strongly advised them to confess all they knew of the "conspiracy," promising to exert his influence to procure their pardon. Of course an indignant disclaimer of all knowledge whatsoever of any conspiracy, was the only reply elicited by this treacherous suggestion. The Egans were then invited to see the various apartments of the jail. In one room they were shown the hangman busily employed preparing ropes for the next execution. But this sight failed to scare them into the false and foolish act of self-incrimination.

In a few days the Special Commission was opened by Lord Norbury and Baron George. The crown prosecutor was Charles Kendal Bushe, then Solicitor-General. The public augured very gloomily for the prisoners as soon as it was known that Lord Norbury was to try the case. Norbury had a terrible reputation for judicial se-

a part of the way. Arriving before the assailants, the military were stationed on the stair-head. The aggressors entered *without any opposition*. One of them, lighting a candle, exposed the whole party to the soldiers, who immediately fired and killed them all! Not a man was left to disclose the agency by which the attack was concerted. The bodies were paraded on carts through the neighbouring villages on the following day, as trophies of the victory obtained by Mr. Corker Wright.

verity. "We'll have great hanging next assizes—Lord Norbury's to come!" was a phrase which familiarly heralded his lordship's approach to assize towns on the circuit.

Two witnesses came from Roscrea to bear testimony to the excellent character of the Egans. One of these was the Rev. Mr. L'Estrange, Protestant Rector of Roscrea. The other was a Protestant layman, Mr. William Smith, who informed the prisoners that shortly previous to the firing at the straw parson through the window, he had been present at a dinner party given by Mr. Birch, of Roscrea, at the Reverend Mr. Hamilton's instance. It was there stated that the Egans were accused, on Dyer's sworn informations, of drilling men in the domain of Mr. Prittie for treasonable purposes; and Mr. Smith was then told that he should be apprized of the mode in which it was intended to proceed against them, provided that he took an oath to keep secret the particulars. Mr. Smith rejected this condition, stating his conviction that the Egans were perfectly incapable of the imputed criminal acts; and that to his own personal knowledge, Dyer had sworn falsely, inasmuch as the Egans were in another place at the very time when they were sworn by that person to have been employed in drilling men in Mr. Prittie's grounds.

Dyer was of course the principal witness. He gave his evidence with great self-possession and dexterity. He deposed to several meetings for military exercise in Mr. Pittie's domain. He was obliged to confess, on cross-examination, that he was in receipt of five shillings a week for suppressing his evidence against one Francis Cotton, on a trial in which the said Cotton* had been charged with the murder of a man named Quigley. The admission of his own infamy in thus compounding the felony of murder, necessarily deprived his evidence against the Egans of weight with the jury. Contradictions in his testimony were also elicited on cross-examination.

The Reverend John Hamilton was the next witness. The trick of the stuffed figure had transpired; and as he knew a cross-examination on the subject awaited him, he resolved to put a bold face on the matter. Accordingly, in his direct evidence, he spoke of the effigy as a stratagem resorted to in order to ascertain if Dyer's previous informations were true; but on his cross-examination he was constrained to admit that he had left the government, as well as seve-

* This Cotton, and also Dyer, were subsequently in the employment of Mr. Birch the distiller, at Roscrea.

ral of his brother magistrates, under the impression that the firing at the effigy was an actual firing at his person.

At the close of the reverend gentleman's testimony the court-house rang with execrations, and the judges had some difficulty in restoring order.

Halpin, and Dyer's brother-in-law, Hickey, were next examined. Halpin gave his evidence with the composure and readiness of an expert "informer." He inculpated Quinlan in the guilt of firing at Mr. Hamilton's effigy under the belief that it was that reverend gentleman himself. Hickey's evidence tended to exonerate Quinlan from having fired; but he swore that Mr. Stephen Egan had administered to him an oath to assist any one who should take Mr. Hamilton's life!

The infamous nature of the prosecution being perfectly manifest, the jury, without the least hesitation, unanimously acquitted the prisoners. Lord Norbury escaped from the court under the pretext of sudden indisposition, leaving Baron George alone upon the bench.

Dyer, with the concurrence of the learned Baron, was placed in the dock by order of the Solicitor-General, and indicted for wilful and corrupt perjury. But the grand jury probably thought he might be useful on some future oc-

casion ; and—to their deep disgrace—they ignored the bill.*

The liberated prisoners were warmly congratulated by their numerous friends. They had rather a narrow escape. Had the Rev. Mr. Hamilton's dexterity of execution been equal to the ingenuity of his invention, it would indeed have fared hardly with them ! It was doubtless a romantic experiment—that of the Orange divine, who

“ Stuffed a figure of himself,
Delicious thought ! and had it shot at,
To bring some Papists to the shelf,
Who could not otherwise be got at ! ”†

The Egans on their return were obliged to enter Roscrea by a back lane, in order to avoid the sanguinary ferocity of about one hundred of the Monaghan militia, who had turned out, half intoxicated, ready for a desperate riot. There were also a large number of Orangemen armed and prepared for mischief, who excited alarm by firing squibs through the town. Colonel Kerr was with some difficulty induced, by the strong

* Dyer still lives (1844) at Roscrea ; he is now advanced in years, and exhibits penitence for his former awful crimes. The witness Hickey was sent out of the country on the failure of Hamilton's plot, by the parties who employed him, and is supposed to have gone to America.

† Fudge Family in Paris.

remonstrance of a military gentleman, to draw the soldiers into the barracks.

Mr. Hamilton published a pamphlet in his own vindication. He expatiated on his magisterial "zeal;" on the innocent nature of the exploit of getting men to fire at his effigy ; which exploit, he loudly protested, was merely an ingenious device, resorted to with the view of ascertaining whether designs against his life were really harboured by the parties whom Dyer had accused. He disclaimed having represented to the government that the firing at the effigy was a firing at his own person ; he alleged that he had made Major Sirr privy to the trick, and that he had requested the Major to convey that information to the Castle authorities. If he did so at all, it was somewhat of the latest !

The most amusing part of Mr. Hamilton's production is his solemn complaint that the Messieurs Egan *showed no gratitude to Colonel Kerr!* He also is dissatisfied with Peel, who was then Irish Secretary :

" It is evident," says the ill-used clergyman, " that Mr. Peel's sole object was to vindicate the Lord Chancellor for not superseding me, and that he had no wish to defend me on my own account."

One would think Peel, in all conscience, had

quite enough to do to palliate the retention of such a person in the magistracy, without entering on a defence of his exploits against the Egan family !

When we look back upon those dreary times ; when we contemplate the social and political depression of the Catholics, and the supremacy of their enemies in all the departments of the state ; when we think of the enormous influence possessed by a virulent faction ; the vast array of selfish interest, deeply rooted prejudice, and impenetrable ignorance, which had to be encountered and overcome ; it is really difficult to form an adequate estimate of the merits of that leader whose voice inspired the timid and the spiritless ; whose judgment directed the intelligent ; whose sagacity restrained the intemperate and rash ; and whose influence combined together the millions in that memorable organization which wrung from reluctant bigotry, the concession of the Catholic rights. The veteran Chief is destined, under God, to be the victor in a yet more glorious contest.

Apropos of “reluctant bigotry.” It is manifest from Twiss’s Life of Lord Eldon, lately published, that George the Fourth’s civil speeches to the Irish, and Viscount Sidmouth’s parting missive, written in 1821 by his Majesty’s authority, were gross delusions, if intended—as they certainly were calculated—to lead the Catholics to

suppose the king not hostile to their claims. Lord Eldon has affectingly pourtrayed the agonies of the “regal reptile” on being compelled to give the royal assent to the Relief Bill. “What can I do?” exclaimed his Majesty; “what can I now fall back upon? I am miserable—wretched; my situation is dreadful; nobody about me to advise with. If I do give my assent, I’ll go to the baths abroad, and from thence to Hanover; I’ll return no more to England; I’ll make no Roman Catholic peers—I will not do what this bill will enable me to do—I’ll return no more—let them get a Catholic King in Clarence—the people will see that I did not wish this!”

I hope that our present gracious Sovereign will concede Repeal with a better grace than that with which her uncle yielded emancipation!

“The people will see that I did not wish this!” Strange, the intense force of bigotry in a mind so thoroughly saturated, so perfectly *imbruted* with the foulest sensuality! But, after all, vices are gregarious. The profligate and the bigot have met in other rulers.

CHAPTER VII.

“ He vowed before the captive’s God, to break the captive’s chain,
To bind the broken heart, and set the bondman free again.”

Anon.

O’Connell’s transition from the lawyer to the statesman was a change for which his long course of political agitation had prepared him. He intimately knew the people whom he was now to combine for the revival of their national legislature; whose scattered strength he was to consolidate in a manner and to an extent altogether unparalleled. The Catholic Association was pronounced to be an *imperium in imperio* of unprecedented magnitude and influence. And so it truly was. But it is equally true that the Repeal Association of the present day far surpasses it in the number of its members; in the extent of its funds; in the steady enthusiasm of its friends to effectuate their object; and in the exquisite perfection of detail with which its orga-

nization is carried into every nook and corner of the country.

The sentiment of nationality has manifestly been the ruling idea of O'Connell's whole career. It broke forth at first in his memorable declaration prior to the passing of the Union, "that he would rather behold the re-enactment of the penal code, than consent to the destruction of the Irish Parliament." With that declaration every subsequent act of his life has been consistent. That he who fleshed his maiden sword in opposition to the Union, should devote his matured abilities to the Repeal of that measure, was naturally to be expected. He struck the right chord; the sympathies of his countrymen responded. In September and October, 1830, he addressed four letters to the Irish public on the subject of Repeal. Those letters produced a deep and general sensation; and if the public adhesion to the cause was not then as universally declared as it has since become, it was because of the great magnitude of the measure, which led even those who were the most friendly to it, to fear that it was impracticable.

O'Connell's appeal to his countrymen was readily responded to. But it is a total mistake to suppose that such response originated solely in the leader's influence. It originated in the

deeply-rooted conviction of men's minds that they were the worse for the extinction of their native legislature, and would be the better for its restoration. What O'Connell openly uttered, every man had felt before. The leader did no more than rehearse the popular sentiment.

By-and-by public meetings began to spring up in different quarters ; the opposition to the tithe-impost at that time convulsed every parish in the land ; and the congenial questions of the extinction of tithes and the Repeal of the Union soon were agitated together upon every rural platform.

The landlords in great numbers espoused the anti-tithe cause. Protestantism they affectionately loved ; but the cheaper they could have it, the better ; and if they could enjoy it gratis, so best ! I knew in 1823 a Tory landlord in collusion with his own Catholic tenant ; the parson claimed his tithe, but the landlord, by collusive distresses and sales, manœuvred for some time to outwit the parson. I have known that same landlord lie in ambush with a gun to shoot the parson's proctor, who presumed to enter on his Protestant premises in order to make a valuation of the growing crops ; and the bellicose gentleman was only restrained from some deed of violence by the strong remonstrance of a

friend on the terrible consequences which the act must have entailed on the perpetrator!

In fact, a great portion of the Protestant proprietary hated the tithes as intensely as the Catholics did; as intensely as they had been hated by their own Protestant ancestors—the members of the Irish House of Commons, who in 1735 passed the memorable agistment act that exempted all pasture lands from the claims of the clergy, and threw the burden of tithe exclusively on tillage.*

“Down with the tithes,” then, was the cry of many a Protestant landlord in 1831 and 1832. But it was purely a selfish cry with a considerable number; a cry of men who simply preferred *not* paying money to paying it; and who dignified their conduct with the sounding phrases of “indignant resistance to an unjust and abominable impost”—“sympathy in the sufferings of a Catholic people compelled to pay a Protestant

* This act is generally described as having thrown the burden of tithes *from* the Protestant aristocracy, *upon* the Catholic tenantry. This is true to some extent; but not to the extent generally supposed. Tillage in the early portion of the last century was so little practised in Ireland, that the legislature, not twenty years prior to the agistment act, had passed a law to compel every man who occupied 100 acres to keep at least 5 acres tilled. Grazing was generally practised; and the Catholic tenant who grazed his land partook of course of the exemption secured to pasture by the act of 1735.

priesthood"—and much more to the same effect. Unjust and abominable is the impost, doubtless ; and a gross spoliation of the Catholics, upon whom the support of *two* churches is hereby thrown ; but the animus of many of the anti-tithe landlords of 1832 was selfish, not national. They only desired to keep the money in their own pockets ; but many had, no doubt, a purer motive.

There was another section of the Protestant landlords, more important in respect of their numbers and their station, and including many of the nobility, who rallied round the parsons at their utmost need ; paid their own tithes ; compelled (where they could) their tenants to pay up theirs, and entered into large subscriptions to enable the parsons to recover all arrears by legal process.

The anti-national church establishment, thus supported at home, and backed by the power of England, outlived a storm of popular vengeance that shook every stone and timber in the edifice.

Let me here briefly notice a few of the chief pretexts put forward on behalf of the Irish church. Some of them are diverting from their reckless absurdity and impudence.

1. It is urged by the transcendental pietists of the Protestant party, "*that the State is bound*

to provide for the dissemination of true christian knowledge amongst the community."

Why, gentlemen, I thought you had been always vociferating that "*the Bible alone*" was the sole arbiter of controversy ; but here you make the State, and *not* the Bible, the arbiter of what is, and what is not, true christian knowledge !

2. "*The Papists have no right to complain : the burden of the tithes does not fall on them at all, inasmuch as if tithes were extinguished tomorrow, the Protestant landlords would screw up the rents to an amount equal to both the present rent and tithe."*"

A palpable fallacy. Whether the tithes be appropriated by Protestant parsons or by Protestant landlords, the transference of tithe-property *from* the Catholic priests in the 16th century *did* then throw upon the Catholics, and has ever since thrown upon them, the burden of supporting by voluntary offerings their own pastors, who had previously been supported by the tithes. It is perfectly plain, then, that the present appropriation of church property is a direct tax on the Catholics to the full extent of the payments they contribute to the support of their own priesthood.*

* Let it not be hence supposed that I desire to see the Catholic priesthood again in possession of the ecclesiastical state revenues.

3. "*The earliest christians of Ireland were Protestants, who fraternized in their belief with the modern Anglican parsons. The parsons of the Anglo-Irish church, therefore, are entitled, in virtue of their spiritual descent from the Irish Protestant christians aforesaid, to enjoy the church temporalities of Ireland.*"

I am not going to disturb the pleasing visions of Protestant antiquity in Ireland. Let those who can discover in Saint Palladius or Saint Patrick a sturdy champion of the thirty-nine articles, enjoy their discovery with all my heart. Admitting, then, for argument's sake, that Saint Palladius was the prototype of the Rev. Tresham Gregg, and Saint Patrick a fac-simile of the rev. hero of Rathcormac, I utterly deny that this admission will sustain the claim of the modern parsons to the Irish church property. On the direct contrary, the fact—if it be a fact—only

I think no heavier evil could fall on Catholicity in Ireland than the state endowment of the priesthood. Nor let it be supposed that I desire to see an *unconditional* abolition of the tithes, which would result in a mere augmentation of the rents. But I *do* desire a new appropriation of the church property to purposes of general benefit; such as public works, public charities, schools, hospitals, roads, bridges, &c. Common honesty requires such a change, in order that the revenues paid by all religionists alike should be appropriated so as to benefit all religionists alike. Now, though a burden on *all*, those revenues are grasped by the pastors of *one-tenth* of the people.

shows what an exquisitely good-for-nothing set of gentlemen the aboriginal Irish Protestant parsons must have been, since it is quite manifest that they suffered the whole nation to slip through their fingers into the hands of Popish priests. On the modern evangelical hypothesis, those early pastors must have been given the tithes as the salary for teaching Protestantism to the Irish people. But they did not keep their part of the bargain, for they suffered all their flocks to lapse into Catholicity. They did not give value for the money, and they consequently disentitled themselves altogether to claim it.

How preposterous, then, to assert for the parsons of the present day, a right as derived from a long extinct generation of parsons, who, if they ever existed at all, manifestly forfeited all title to the tithes some thousand or twelve hundred years ago? Were such a plea valid, it would follow by parity of reasoning, that if the original tithe-holders in Ireland had been Mahometans, then a corps of Turkish Muftis would, at the present day, enjoy the right to church property in Ireland!

These evangelic claims to the tithes, in virtue of the alleged identity in creed of the parsons of the nineteenth century with the Irish christians of the fifth, are usually combined, moreover, with

some gross insult offered to the “slaves of the papal apostacy.”

As to the miserable wrangling of adverse religionists, let it pass for what it is worth. I bear no enmity to any man for calling me a limb of Antichrist, and telling me I must necessarily go to the devil as a follower of the Pope. Certainly such language is not civil, and I am convinced it is not true. But there is little wisdom in quarrelling with men for mere incivility, or for a mistaken view of my chances of salvation. “Antichrist,” shouted at a Catholic by some delirious enthusiast of Exeter Hall, should no more excite his wrath than “G— d—n your blood!” from a drunken trooper. It is sheer spiritual Billingsgate. But if the abuse of our faith becomes the watch-word of a powerful party; if it become the rallying cry of men who avail themselves of the spirit it excites to assail our pockets or abridge our liberties; *then* indeed we are called on to resent it; to resist the party who use their fanaticism as an engine wherewith to work out our oppression.

If the inhabitants of the kingdom all professed the same religion, there might be a plausible excuse set up for giving the tithes to their pastors, although, even then, I should on principle prefer the voluntary system. But broken up into various forms of belief as the Irish population are,

the case becomes totally altered. If the state has a right to give *one* tenth of the produce of the soil to the Anglican parsons, it has just as good a right to give *another* tenth to the Presbyterian clergy; another tenth again to the Catholic priests; another to the Methodist preachers, and so on to the end of the chapter, until the entire produce of the land became exhausted in supplying payment to the pastors of the different sects. There can be no reason shown why the state *should* allot tithes to Parson Martin of Killeshandra, and why at the same time it *should not* allot tithes to Dr. Cooke of Belfast, or Father Maguire of Ballinamore. Each of those gentlemen stoutly claims possession of the truth. It is worse than ludicrous to leave their theologic claims to the decision of the state !

The state, truly ! And who compose the state ? There are Peel and Stanley, the Established Churchmen. There are Gladstone and Milnes, the Puseyites. There are Agnew and Plumptre, the Puritans—Sheil and O'Ferrall, the Papists—Joe Hume, the Anythingarian—Waterford Wyse, the Everythingarian*—Ellenborough,

* “We are all of the same religion.”—*Speech of Mr. Wyse at the Cork Meeting to promote the establishment of Provincial Colleges.*”

the volunteer pontiff of Somnauth*—those men, and others of an endless diversity of religious sentiments, constitute the state !

Could the force of absurdity go farther than to erect such a junto into a tribunal to pronounce definitively *where* religious truth resides ; and what community of spiritual teachers is entitled, in virtue of possessing such truth, to possess also the ecclesiastical revenues of the kingdom !

* *Vide* his lordship's sublime proclamation about the gates of the Idols Temple at Somnauth.

CHAPTER VIII.

Then who's the wretch that basely spurns
The ties of country, kindred, friends,
That barters every nobler aim
For sordid views—for private ends ?
One slave alone on earth you'll find,
Thro' nature's universal span,
So lost to virtue—dead to shame,
The anti-Irish Irishman.

Spirit of the Nation.

I have said that “Repeal” and “No Tithes” were associated on the platforms. So they ought. For the Union and the Church Establishment have a mutual efficacy in each other’s sustentation. If it were not for the Union, the Establishment would long since have been extinct. An Irish Parliament would have long since made a life-provision for existing incumbents, and appropriated the reversion of the ecclesiastical revenues to secular purposes of public utility, available to *all*, without distinction of creed.

On the other hand, the existence of the Irish state-church affords a most effective nucleus for the “English interest” in Ireland; a most powerful stimulant to expectant dignitaries and their friends to maintain the Union, as they know that their golden Israel would not long survive the Repeal.

It is a curious mutual reaction. Two huge grievances sustaining each other. "Don't touch the Union, or the Church Establishment will fall!" exclaim the Irish parsons. "Don't extinguish the Church Establishment, or the Union will infallibly go next," exclaims Lord Stanley; and undoubtedly both are quite right. And between both, Ireland pays dearly enough! The church revenues are about £600,000 per annum, in their present reduced state. The money drain out of Ireland resulting from the Union is generally estimated by the Repealers at about £8,000,000 per annum. Translated into vulgar arithmetic, the cry for the Church and for the Union means this: "Let the parsons plunder Ireland of £600,000 a year," exclaims the English statesman, "for thereby they have an interest in assisting *us* to plunder Ireland of eight millions!"—"Plunder away!" respond the parsons; "crush manufactures—take absentee rents—drain surplus taxes; take your eight millions a year so long as you help *us* to enjoy our good snug pickings of six hundred thousand."

Of the two inflictions, Church and Union, the Union is beyond comparison the more intolerable. The tithes are an unjust tax; the ecclesiastical revenues are unfairly appropriated; but still they are spent within the country. No doubt it

is not very agreeable to pay money to a set of men for the pleasure of seeing them spend it ; but, bad as it is, it becomes almost tolerable by comparison with a system that exhausts, with sponge-like efficacy, the wealth and resources of the land.

It is utterly preposterous to talk of the Irish Church Establishment as a religious institution. It is as purely political as the Chartist convention. Religious ! What act has it performed, what ends has it achieved, to answer the purpose of a religious institution ? Has it converted the Catholics of Ireland to the Protestant creed ? They were but as three to one a century ago ; *now* they are as eight to one—strong evidence this of its missionary efficacy ! Has it diffused through the length and breadth of the land the christian blessings of peace, fraternal love, good will, and mutual tolerance ? There it stands—hating and hated—exacting and execrated !—prolific in outrage, tears, and wailings—a monument of English power and Irish degradation.

It is this last named quality that constitutes its political usefulness in the estimation of our rulers. It keeps up an English party in this country. It holds out rich rewards and inducements to a very large class, to sustain, in every possible mode, the (so-called) interests of impe-

rial England, as opposed to those of provincial Ireland. The injury of being thus rendered subservient to the powerful rivalry of another land, becomes the more galling when (as in the case of Ireland) the depressed nation is compelled to be the paymaster of those officers who enforce and perpetuate its own servitude. A man who thinks he can smooth his path to station and salary by crying, "Up with England ! Down with Ireland !" finds the natural inducement to anti-national politics immensely augmented, when to the motive of self-interest is added the powerful stimulant of religious partizanship.

That such a wealthy exclusive institution as the Church Establishment should have kept a large portion of the Protestant body from merging into the great national mass, is not very much to be marvelled at. Sectarian bigotry, combined with pecuniary profit, has availed to perpetuate the original hostility to Ireland of the Elizabethan, Cromwellian, and Williamite adventurers, in the breasts of their descendants of the present day. This long-cherished hatred of a domestic faction to their countrymen has no parallel in any other country. You will find all Frenchmen, of whatever party in the state, zealous for the glory of France ; all Germans ardent for the honour of Germany ; Spaniards for Spain, and so

on. It is in Ireland *only* that you will hear from the lips of her own unnatural children the frequent expressions, "this odious land!" "this detestable people!" "England will drag her triumphant cannon over your prostrate carcasses if you dare to resist!"* with innumerable similar ebullitions of a deadly and venomous hatred to the unoffending millions amongst whom their lot is cast, and whose only crime is a peaceful struggle for the common liberties of their revilers as well as of themselves.

What, I ask, is the inexhaustible fountain of this deep and pestilent hatred of Ireland by Irishmen? What feeds the stream of ceaseless calumny, insult, and political enmity? Again I answer—the Church Establishment, acting through the interests it affects.

Despite the lapse of ages—despite even the

* Emerson Tennent was the utterer of this anti-national brag. Apropôs of that gentleman; his eulogists praise his indefatigable *industry*. Industrious he is, no doubt; but his industry is of a species which calls to mind that of the industrious fleas. To fire off a Lilliputian cannon—to draw a microscopic coach, are not in themselves exploits to call forth admiration or wonder; but they become miraculous when performed by the active and indefatigable little insects alluded to. Mr. Tennent's unwearied accumulation of little facts and little fictions, excites praise, I presume, on the analogous principle, that the performer of the feat is a person of the mental calibre of—Mr. Tennent!

connexions formed by marriage with many of the native families, the hostile spirit of the invader is as fresh, as vivid, in the modern descendants of the ruthless soldiery of Essex or St. Leger, of the sanguinary fanatics of the commonwealth, or of the military settlers of the Williamite era, as it was some centuries since in the breasts of their forefathers. They have never become blended with the people. I have heard language redolent of the most contemptuous and envenomed hostility to the *national* population of Ireland, proceeding from tongues whose rich Hibernian brogue contrasted ludicrously with the anti-Hibernian sentiments they uttered. Even the ignorant Orange tradesman still feels himself a sort of Englishman in virtue of his English creed, and the long habits (not yet extinguished by emancipation) of regarding its profession as a badge of social superiority.

The most zealous Protestant, if *sincerely* desirous for the propagation of his religion, must desire the removal of a church establishment which has rendered that religion more unpopular in Ireland than ten thousand Bellarmines or Bossuets could possibly have done.

The Catholic desires the removal of a system which takes the tenth of the profits of his industry; (whether in kind, as formerly, or in the form of composition, as now, it matters not!)

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The Irish nationalist, whether Catholic or Protestant, desires to get rid of an establishment in which he can only recognize an instrument of imperialization, effectual in creating mutual distrust and hatred; an instrument which debases and degrades the Protestant mind by rendering it un-Irish; which trains it to crouch to England in return for the protection afforded to domestic plunder.

I have thus minutely examined the political results of the institution entitled "the church as by law established," in order that the English reader might be fully aware of the principal domestic difficulty we have had to contend with in our agitation for Repeal. A dispassionate observer at a distance might well be at a loss to account for the totally unprecedented anti-national virulence which in Ireland obstructs the thorough combination of all parties for objects of national benefit.

Some gentle-souled Whig-liberals have said, "Oh, get your rulers to look to the un-Irish virulence in question, with a view to counteract its mischiefs." Idle talk! Our rulers are perfectly aware of its existence, and they use it as an engine to work out their system of imperialization. They cherish—they foment it; they regard it as a valuable instrument to prevent Ireland from becoming *too strong*.

To a person unaware of the true source of the foul and unnatural hostility of Ireland's domestic enemies to their country, how strange, how unaccountable, must that hostility appear ! How strange that no national yearnings should be excited in their minds by the hallowed associations of home, the ties of kindred, the "casting of their lot" in the old land of their birth !—that the blending of their forefathers' dust for many a generation with Irish earth, should yet leave the living descendant as alien in feeling, nay as hostile, as if no such associations existed to bind his heart to his fatherland ! Strange that the mystic voices of the breeze that stirs the ancient sycamores over his ancestors' graves, should not whisper to his spirit to love Ireland—to strive for her liberties ! Strange that he should have no pride of country ; that not only is he destitute of the ordinary sentiment of patriotism indigenous to every other land on earth, but that from his tongue should emanate the bitterest insults to Ireland and her sons ; from his brain should proceed the wickedest devices to enthrall his own countrymen ! I once heard a jolly Irish squire of English descent, whose estate lay in as peaceable a district as any in the world, exclaim that if it were not for the personal supervision his property required from him, he would quit "this

d—d abominable country and go live in England.” An orator named Harte proclaimed in a speech at the Dublin Conservative Society some years ago, that “it was perfectly notorious to every man who heard him, that to be a Protestant in Ireland was sufficient to render life insecure!” These instances are not isolated. The party who exhibit this astounding hatred to their country are indefatigable in their calumnies. The inspiring source of that hatred is clearly discernible in the pseudo-religious character of their attacks. Take two recent instances, which accidentally meet my eye as I write; the first is an extract from the *Cork Constitution* newspaper of the 27th July, 1844; it is headed

“DOINGS IN DINGLE.

“On Sunday last, the Rev. Mr. Brasbie read his public recantation from the errors of Popery in Dingle church. The fact of a priest abjuring Popery caused great excitement, and the magistrates, having got full notice that the mob were determined to execute Lynch law on the priest on his road to the church, took full precautions to preserve the peace. Before service commenced, the townspeople were astonished to see the Hon. Captain Plunkett, of H. M. steamer

Strömbo*li*, march into the town from Ventry, with a force of about 100 men inclading the Marine Artillery and marines, *with drums and colours*. This fine body of men, *armed to the teeth*, having joined the seamen and marines of H. M. brigantine Lynx under the command of Captain Nott, presented such an imposing appearance, that, we need scarcely say, everything passed off very quietly. The coast guards from the surrounding stations were marched to church, *fully armed*, and conveyed the rev. gentleman to the house of the Rev. Mr. Gayer, where he at present remains. Mr. Gillman, our active sub-inspector, had *all his police ready to turn out at a moment's notice*. Dingle for the last twenty years *never presented such a force!*

Lord Aberdeen lately apologized in Parliament for the non-transmission of a marine force to Morocco, as H. M. war-vessels were on duty on the coast of Ireland. We now see the awful nature of the "duty" which deprived the Mediterranean of the presence of the British flag. The Stromboli and the Lynx were required to assist the "Missionary Church" (as the *Evening Mail* delights to term the establishment) in the acquisition of the Rev. Mr. Brasbie to her fold!

The whole paragraph is richly redolent of Irish-State-Churchism! The transition from Po-

pish error to Protestant truth is performed by the beat of drum and with the flourish of military colours. The triumph of having caught a priest who will renounce holy water and purgatory, is combined with the congenial triumph of saying to the mob, "Ha ! my fine fellows ! we've 100 marines *armed to the teeth*, ready to cut you down if you dare to wag a finger !" The orthodox parade of "*such a force as Dingle had not seen for twenty years*," is requisite to give due eclat to the Rev. Mr. Brasbie's exchange of Pope Gregory XVI. for Pope Victoria as the head of his church ; and moreover to protect the sacred person of the convert from the truculence of the "mob," who in all probability did not care three straws for the exploits of the Rev. Mr. Brasbie !

The other instance is the renewed prosecution by the Rev. Mr. Nangle of Achill, of eleven Achillonians at the Mayo assizes of July, 1844, for an alleged attempt to induce one Francis M'Hugh to enter into a conspiracy to burn the rev. gentleman's house. The rev. gentleman had previously printed in *The Achill Herald* (of which he is the editor) a statement that the Catholics of the island had conspired to break into his dwelling and strangle the inhabitants.

No rational person imagines that the Rev. Mr.

Nangle believed that these serious accusations were true. They were interspersed with a good deal of pious phraseology about the spiritual blindness of the people. The charge of attempting to involve M'Hugh in the conspiracy to burn the house was sworn to at the assizes by that person himself, who appears to be a convert, probably of Mr. Nangle's manufacture. His sworn testimony was rejected by Judge Jackson as totally incredible.

I have instanced these public and private attempts to blacken the character of the Irish people, as vivid illustrations of the moral poison which taints a considerable section of Irish Protestant society. The imputed "Lynch law" of the Dingle mob; the imputed conspiracies to commit murder and arson at Achill, are, it is true, very recent cases; but so extensively prevalent and so continuous has been the system of foul and bitter calumny, that they will answer as characteristics of twenty years back quite as well as of the present day.

Let me here parenthetically observe, that great as has been the evil resulting from religious bigotry, yet the presence of two hostile creeds within the land has not been totally without its good. I have heretofore spoken of the Protestant church *exclusively* with reference to its temporal

establishment. I now speak of it as a religious system ; and, as such, it has derived much spiritual advantage from the presence of antagonist Catholicity. The advantage has been mutual. Two rival creeds will watch and purify each other. Not that this is any justification of religious differences ; not that such differences are *necessary* to preserve religion pure ; but simply that where they *do* exist, God can make use of them for that purpose.

Contrast the morals of the Protestants of the present day with those of their fathers in the hey-day of the penal laws, when Catholics were too insignificant to be their rivals ; when Protestantism had everything its own way. Then were the golden days of duelling ; of drunkenness ; of profligate clubs in the metropolis, "the Cherokee," "the Hellfire," "the Pinkers and Sweaters," whose orgies are still preserved in the local traditions of Dublin. Then were the days of gallant, jovial, hard-drinking parsons ; men who were paid by the state for talking every Sunday about religion, and who accordingly *did* pronounce some cold and formal sentences to congregations who, on their parts, conceived that they performed a very meritorious duty in listening with grave faces to the solemn twaddle. Catholicity, however, rose up in renovated

strength ; shook off its penal bondages, and assumed the attitude of spiritual rivalry. The established church was alarmed. If the Protestant clergy and their flocks became more bigoted, they certainly became more virtuous. The parsons of to-day are a moral and a pious body of men. Apart from the drawbacks of anti-Irish and anti-Catholic slander (in which not one twentieth part of them *actively* participate) the parsons are in general personally virtuous and exemplary.

Would to God that Irishmen of all creeds could recognize and rejoice in each other's good qualities ; that they could turn the rivalship of antagonist creeds to its legitimate account—the promotion of religion and morality ; discard all unchristian acerbity, and unite with cordial, mutual trustfulness in the national cause !

CHAPTER IX.

'Tis only to gather
Our strength and be ready,
The son with the father—
The wild with the steady—
In front of the danger
To tramp all together
Defying the stranger
In hall or in heather !

J. De Jean.

We have seen, in the preceding chapter, the chief influence which antagonised Repeal.

The continued existence of the Union for thirty years had also a powerful effect in numbing nationality. Those whose creed inspired them with a suspicion of their countrymen, had moreover become accustomed to be legislated for in England; and use had rendered them insensible to the degradation which had roused up in 1800 the Irish spirit of the very Orangemen to oppose the provincialising of their country. The Union had debased and degraded many of the generation who had grown up since its enactment. They sneered at the Repealers as visionaries, and—prejudging the whole matter in dispute—they flippantly asserted that there was

nothing Ireland could gain from native legislation, that she could not also obtain from the imperial parliament.

The Reform Bill caused great excitement in England. The Irish were busy with their own agitation ; and when Reform had been carried, and some enlargement of the constituencies temporarily effected, the Repealers mustered their strength to send members to St. Stephen's who should represent their principles.

Many Irish agitators, elate with the prospect of Parliamentary distinction, were speedily in the field. Ere the senatorial vision had crossed their aspiring thoughts, some three or four had acquired more than ordinary notoriety by their agitation.

Of these, one of the most conspicuous was Feargus O'Connor.

Feargus is the son of Roger O'Connor, who in 1798 resided at Connorville near Dunmanway in the county of Cork.

Roger O'Connor was involved in the rebellion of which his brother Arthur was one of the principal leaders ; but his politics did not on all points assimilate with his brother's. Arthur wished to make Ireland a republic on the French model of 1792. Arthur was a thoroughly honest politician. Of his perfect disinterestedness there

is conclusive proof in the fact that he deliberately forfeited the splendid inheritance of his maternal uncle, Lord Longueville, who was childless, and who would have made him his heir if his politics had been similar to his own. The venerable exile—now in his 79th year—is deservedly honoured by men of all parties.

Roger's views were monarchical ; I believe he intended to exercise the sovereign authority himself.

Roger employed his military skill in fortifying Connorville to sustain an attack from the king's troops. He planned a trap for them, also, of which I had a detailed description from a gentleman who was personally cognizant of the device.

There were two fronts to Connorville house. From the front that faced the public road the hall-door steps were removed ; and the windows of the basement story on that side of the house were strongly built up. No hostile entry could have been effected upon that front.

The other front opened on a large courtyard, nearly surrounded with high buildings. From the eastern side of this courtyard ran a broad, straight avenue about six hundred yards in length, between two very lofty walls overgrown with ivy of extraordinary luxuriance. At the extremity of this avenue farthest from the house

was a high and massive iron gate. The whole length of the avenue was commanded by cannon which were placed in a shed in the courtyard, and managed by French artillery-men.

The massive gate at the eastern end of the avenue was left constantly open, to invite the entrance of his majesty's troops in the event of a hostile descent upon Connorville. There were men always stationed *perdu* in the huge ivy bushes at the top of the piers, to lock the gates the instant the military force should have passed through. The soldiers would thus be caught in a complete trap; hemmed in by the lofty walls that flanked the avenue; their retreat cut off by the iron gate behind them, and their position fully raked by the cannon in the courtyard.

The scheme was feasible enough, but it never was realized. The soldiery made the expected descent—they entered the avenue and courtyard, but, whether the artillerymen had deserted their post, or had forgotten to blow the enemy to pieces, or whether Roger relented from his original design, certain it is that the red coats scoured the premises without molestation, and Roger surveyed them from the friendly shade of a holly tree in which he was ensconced, on a rocky eminence that overlooked the courtyard from the north. He escaped on that occasion—

his capture did not occur for some months after.

His subsequent imprisonment at Fort George in Scotland is well known. When the perils in which he was involved had blown over, he returned to Ireland, and took a lease of the magnificent castle of Dangan in the county of Meath, the birth-place of the Duke of Wellington and the family seat of the Wellesleys. Roger's declared object in becoming the occupant of Dangan, was, that he might possess a house fit for the reception of Buonaparte; as he professed a firm faith in the advent of the emperor to Ireland. Wellington, however, was less hospitable, and effectually prevented the visit of Napoleon to his hereditary residence.

Feargus was born at Connorville, about 1796 or 1797; he resided with his father at Dangan until the castle was unfortunately consumed by an accidental fire. Roger was eccentric and imaginative; Feargus early acquired a taste for an adventurous life, and politics naturally enough had a place in his ruminations. In 1822 he published a pamphlet fiercely denouncing the local oppressors of the peasantry—parsons, tithe-proctors, grinding middlemen, jobbing grand-jurors—with especial censure of all magistrates trafficking in “justice.”

As yet, Feargus had not tried his rhetorical

powers in public. But the exciting political transactions of 1831 and 1832, of necessity called forth so active and ardent a spirit. He first appeared at a Whig meeting held in Cork in December 1831, for the purpose of forwarding reform. Messieurs Jephson of Mallow; N. P. Leader, then member for Kilkenny; Delacour (the banker); Stawell, of Kilbrittain; Baldwin, of Cork; with some youthful scions of the Shannon and Kingston families, and several other Whig notables of the county, were mustered in the old Court-house on the Grand Parade at an early hour. They all rehearsed the usual humdrum whiggifications on the subject of reform; talked in a tone of aristocratic condescension about the claims of the democracy; announced that in order to establish a right to full citizenship it was not requisite that men should exhibit rent-rolls and pedigrees; with a great deal of equally respectable axiomatic twaddle. Up to four o'clock the most amusing speaker was Leader, the member for Kilkenny: he was a stout, thickset man, with a wild ferocious eye: he shouted and bellowed, gesticulated like a harlequin, slapped his thighs, spun nearly round on tiptoe, emphasized remarkable hits by bobbing down his head within a couple of feet of the floor, roared, stamped, rant-ed, blustered, and perforce of a thundering expen-

diture of personal energy elicited vociferous applause.

Late in the day Feargus came forward to the front of one of the galleries ; distanced all the Whigs and Reformers by exclaiming that Repeal alone could save Ireland from ruin ; and certainly so far as concerned the external matters of voice, action, and delivery, he made beyond all comparison the best speech of the day.

Feargus now set himself to work in earnest, to attain political leadership. He had not yet contemplated an attack on the representation of the county, for he had not yet seen to what extent the Reform bill would popularize the constituency ; but he dearly loved the greeting cheers of the multitude ; he reveled in the consciousness of possessing unusual volubility, and he had a strong conviction that his popular talents would soon exalt him into a position of political command.

In the summer of 1832 the anti-tithe agitation extended itself all over the county of Cork.—Feargus was ubiquitous ! Macroom, Dunmanway, Enniskean, and several other places were visited in rapid succession. “ Fargus,” as the country folk familiarly termed him, soon ingratiated himself into every one’s favour ; and by the frankness and ease of his address, and his

great colloquial powers, disarmed the suspicious enmity of many in the middle ranks, who had previously anathematized both himself and his cause.

He soon received the distinction of two or three public entertainments. At Macroom he got a dinner from about three hundred farmers and shopkeepers, at which he, for the first time, publicly announced himself a candidate for the representation. He declared, in accents of the utmost pathos, that his advocacy of the people's rights had weaned from him the affections of his nearest relatives.

"Since I last," said he, "met my friends of Macroom, there has been no smile on my cheek, no comfort in my breast. My nearest relations have turned from me; it is true they recognize me privately, but in public they have wounded my feelings. I leave them to that awful moment when the sacred Monitor shall arouse them to reflection—when he shall tap here (pointing to his breast), and cry, *Awake! Be judged!*"

It behoved the people upon whose behalf the sufferings in question were incurred, to apply the salve to the patriotic victim. The electors in the liberal interest had been urged by the Catholic clergy to register their votes, and the

shrewd ones began with confidence to augur a very large liberal majority at the next general election. At the Macroom dinner, as we learn from the Cork *Southern Reporter* of that date, "the subject of the representation was freely discussed. Mr. O'Connor announced his intention of becoming a candidate for the county of Cork at the approaching election. He was received with great enthusiasm, and all present confirmed his pretensions by the highest eulogy of his claims and character. A general pledge was made by the company of their support and influence. At the suggestion of the chairman, a resolution was entered into for the formation of an independent club to organize the representative franchise in the county, the better to secure the return of Mr. O'Connor, in conjunction with any other popular candidate who should present himself. The conditions laid down for the future candidates, were a full support of the Repeal of the Union—total abolition of tithes, vote by ballot, and universal suffrage."

It was late at night when Feargus rose to announce his resolution to become a candidate for the county. The candles had nearly burned down to their sockets, and threw a dim and doubtful gleam upon the large apartment. The crowd had drawn close to the small dais, or plat-

form, on which were assembled the chairman, the guest, and two or three other country gentlemen. There was great exultation at the hope of seeing the popular favourite returned to Parliament. A rapturous hurrah ! testified the general delight at Feargus's announcement. The candidate resumed his seat, much pleased at the sympathy of his friends ; when a movement was discerned in the midst of the throng, as of some stalwart fellow elbowing his way to the front ; Feargus rose, and recognized the person who was forcing himself forward ; he was a broad shouldered, red-haired, athletic Protestant farmer named Whiting, who bore a strong personal resemblance to the burly candidate himself.

"Make room for Mr. Whiting," said Feargus in his blandest accents. Room was immediately made for his passage. "How are you, my worthy friend ?" continued Feargus, courteously shaking hands with Whiting. "Would you wish to get on the platform ? We've plenty of room for you."

Whiting accepted the invitation, and was given a chair, on which he seated himself. He gazed for some moments at Feargus in mute ecstasy, and then broke forth—

"O Fargus ! Fargus ! is it not the murdher of the world to see *you* looking after the repre-

sentation of a county in their English Parliament, instead of enjoying (as by right you ought) the royal crown of Ireland upon that honest red head, as was worn by your ancestors in the ancient times of ould ?”

Feargus, however, limited his ambition to a seat for the county, despite this stimulating burst of post-prandial enthusiasm. He smiled assuasively in return for Mr. Whiting's complimentary allusion to his ancestral honours : the scene was amusing, and its effect was heightened by the personal resemblance of the sturdy yeoman and the patriotic orator who exchanged the most affectionate glances with each other.

Feargus lashed all jobbers—particularly jobbing magistrates who made a profitable traffic of their justiceship—“they eat justice, drank justice, lay upon justice, rode justice, wore justice —aye, threadbare !”

He complimented the tradesmen of Macroom, by whom he was surrounded :

“Tradesmen we are all, in fact, from the monarch who fills the throne and whose trade is that of *cabinet-making*, to the humble chimney-sweeper who loudly proclaims his calling from the house-tops. *I* am a tradesman of Macroom ; I was bound apprentice in the great square on the 10th of June last” (alluding to the anti-tithe

meeting held on that day); “and on my show-board shall be Peace, Industry, Union, and Freedom.”

At the Enniskean anti-tithe meeting, Feargus gallantly defied the Duke of Wellington. “I did hear that a military force was to have attended. If I saw that force under the command of the Great Captain of the age, I would tell him he was in his dotage, and that the power of knowledge was greater than the power of cannon.”

He defended himself from calumnious imputations :

“Here I stand in the midst of thousands and tens of thousands to whom I have been known from my birth, and I fearlessly ask them if the breath of slander has *here* ever dared to assail my character?” (“No! no!” and cheers.) “Have I ever oppressed the meanest individual among you?” (“No! no! hurrah!”) “Have I not ever been your adviser and director?” (“Yes! yes! yes!”)

He announced the religious object of his agitation at a dinner given him in Enniskean: “My object is to purify the religion I profess by lopping off its rotten and redundant temporalities;” and he fiercely inquired “whether the religion of the Almighty was to be set in blood?”, alluding to the fatal tithe affrays.

At a dinner given in Cork to the late Bishop England, Feargus concluded a vehement speech in these words :

" No ! though our sea-bound dungeon were encompassed by the wooden walls of old England —though the 300,000 promised Cossacks marched through the land with all the emblems of death, the rack, the scaffold, and the axe, yet I would suffer martyrdom ere I would throw up my hat, and cry ' All hail ! ' to him* who dragged my country's Liberator like a common felon captive through the streets of the metropolis to answer a charge made crime by proclamation. No ! though stretched upon the rack I would smile terror out of countenance, and die as I have lived—a pure lover of liberty ! "

The comment of the reporter for the Cork *Mercantile Chronicle* ran thus :—

" This splendid effusion of masculine eloquence created a most extraordinary sensation, coming as it did, like a thunder-clap, on all. The talented speaker was long and loudly cheered on resuming his seat ; and we will augur that it will be long before he is forgotten by the people of this city."

* The Marquis of Anglesea.

Feargus had now established his fame through the county as "a fine speaker." In the city of Cork he was generally called "the Rattler!" Those who have not heard him in public, and who have only judged of his abilities from his printed effusions, have invariably done great injustice to his powers. He was remarkably ready and self-possessed. He was capable of producing extraordinary popular effect. He had very great declamatory talent; he had also great defects. As a *stimulating* orator in a popular assembly he was unexcelled. It is true he dealt largely in bombast, broken metaphor, and inflated language; but while you listened, these blemishes were altogether lost in the infectious vehemence of his spirited manner; you were charmed with the melodious voice, the musical cadences, the astonishing volubility, the imposing self-confidence of the man; and the gallant air of bold defiance with which he assailed all oppression and tyranny. The difference between his spoken and printed harangues was surprisingly great.

He mingled the exciting qualities I have enumerated, with a very sparing amount of argumentative power. He blended the facility of at first acquiring popular influence, with a sad incapacity to retain it. He displayed an exhaustless fund of vituperative vigour in lashing

all the parties obnoxious to the people ; but he was sometimes betrayed by want of reflection into receiving and announcing as truths the most incredible exaggerations : for instance, he proclaimed to a numerous meeting in Bandon that certain portions of the parish of Timoleague paid tithe at the rate of *ninety pounds per acre* ; and that the fact of the extravagant tithe-charge in question had been confirmed upon oath before two magistrates !

During the entire of the "agitating" summer and autumn of 1832, scenes of a highly exciting and picturesque character were constantly exhibited. The meetings for "Repeal" and "no Tithes" were usually held on Sundays after mass. It was an interesting sight to behold the rustic worshippers wending along the glen and down the hill side—sauntering through "the lone vale of green bracken" beneath the brilliant morning sunshine ; crowding to the parish chapel at the call of the bell—stragglers from the outskirts of the parish endeavouring to recover lost time by short cuts and increased speed, as they sprang with agility over the ditches. Then there was the muster of the hardy peasants in the chapel-yard—the more thoughtless occupying the short interval before mass in enquiring the news of the day ; the more devout kneeling apart before

the altar rails, or under the rude pictures called "the stations of the cross" which sometimes adorn the chapel walls ; or in some shaded spot without the sacred edifice, where, unmolested, they might recite the Litany of Jesus or one of the Penitential Psalms beneath the shadow of an old hawthorn. Then came the last quick toll of the bell, announcing that divine service was just going to commence ; then the hurried gathering into the chapel ; the mass, the homely discourse in Gaelic ; and after the "Ite ! missa est !" an announcement of the meeting of the day.

The meeting frequently comprised the inhabitants of many parishes. The dark multitudes streamed from the hills to the common centre ; many on horseback, but the greater number on foot. There was a proud thrill in every man's breast ; all felt the exalting consciousness that a nation were mustering and banding together to assert their rights. The Irish peasantry are not mere clodpoles. They are an imaginative and intellectual race ; they love their native land and they are proud of it. They are highly susceptible of every external impression that can tend to heighten the sentiment of patriotism ; and as the multitudes traversed the grand scenery of the parishes on the sea coast, many a foot was arrested on the heights which commanded a view

of the bold mountain peaks, the magnificent expanse of ocean, the steep cliffs, the rich green glens often winding from the shore among the hills ; and many a heart felt to its inmost core that the freedom of such a glorious land was worth any struggle men could make—any peril that men could encounter !

The meeting usually mustered in full strength at the appointed place about three o'clock in the afternoon. The chairman was often a Protestant, whose hatred of tithes was not less intense than that felt by the Catholic concourse around him. I only knew of *one* Protestant chairman who would rather have been absent from his post. The worthy gentleman was deemed a prize by his anti-titheist neighbours ; they made many attempts to catch him for their chairman, but he always coquettishly evaded the point, until it was delicately hinted that in the event of his persisting in refusal, the requisitionists would develop to the board of excise certain smuggling transactions in which he was engaged. The hint was sufficient. Mr. ***** , whose conscience had rather strained at the sacrilegious assault upon tithes although it could swallow whole cargoes of contraband goods without scruple, at last consented to preside ; and he delivered a philippic against the church tem-

poralities, of which the poignant bitterness amply redeemed his previous apathy !

Feargus was of course quite in his element at all these public meetings. He hated the union with cordial bitterness ; he hated the tithes with equal intensity ; and he had numerous stories of ecclesiastical delinquency at his fingers' ends, much better authenticated than the startling legend of the "ninety pounds per acre." He spoke of the parish in which his own residence, Fort Robert, was situated ; told how the rector, Mr. Hamilton, had never set his foot within the parish for five-and-thirty years ; exposed the vestry that had *enlarged* the clerk's salary, *because* he resided at a distance from the parish ! and denounced the jolly sexton who kept a house of ill-fame at the church-gate !

The people were enchanted with his scathing exposures of clerical, magisterial, and legislative iniquity ; and " Fargus" was unanimously pronounced to be "the devil of a fellow." His manners were excessively conciliating ; in private they were courteous and refined ; in public they were hearty, rattling, and impulsive. He had frolicsome touches of mimicry, nickname, and claptrap ; he now and then let off a telling pun. His courteous demeanour alternated with a certain indescribable swagger, which, however, was not

in the least degree offensive, and merely indicated the right good opinion which he entertained of himself without disparagement to any one else. He was a capital *raconteur*. His talents as a mimic were first-rate. His was not that mere parrot-mimicry that imitates sounds only ; he was a mimic of sentiment and feeling ; he could take up the whole train of thought as well as the voice, and present you with a faithful and exquisitely ludicrous resemblance of mental as well as vocal characteristics.

Feargus also excelled in repartee. He had strong satirical powers, a formidable readiness in retort, and could pounce with caustic and merciless sarcasm on the weak or ludicrous points of an antagonist ; so that whenever any incivility was attempted at his expense, he retaliated with a pungency that made his opponent repent his rashness in assailing him. Woe to the wight who attempted to "take down" O'Connor ! He was sure to be shown up—the victim of prompt, stinging, shattering ridicule ; although Feargus, when not attacked, was remarkable for suavity and excellent temper.

He was fond of puns, and generally made them *tell*. At a meeting which he attended, after having been for some time absent from the country, it chanced that there stood at his

right hand on the platform, a patriotic paper-manufacturer named *Kidney*. Feargus assured his audience that his absence from home had not altered his politics :

“Here I am,” quoth he, “unchanged ! the same pure lover of liberty you have ever known me ; with the same honest heart, and the same stout *Kidney* too !” (patting his worthy and stalwart neighbour on the shoulder, amidst shouts of laughter.)

Feargus’s strongest point was his great physical energy. He was perfectly indefatigable in his agitation. In all the quarters of the compass —wherever a popular muster of sufficient magnitude was announced—there was invariably to be seen the popular agitator with the brawny muscular figure, the big round shoulders, the red curly tresses overhanging the collar of his coat, the cajoling smirk, the insinuating manners, and the fluent tongue. His taste in eloquence was not at that time particularly rigorous ; his language was such as, in Homeric phrase, might be termed “poluphlosboios ;” he was fond of sounding and redundant sentences ; he often declared, for example, that the people were “*wrecked by disunion, torn by discord, revolutionized by faction,*” this description of talk rolled off his tongue in continuous torrents.

The Whig and Tory squirearchy laughed to derision Feargus's prospects of success. They affected a total incapacity to conceive *how* Feargus could succeed. They sneered at the rustic meetings, the public dinners got up among the village shopkeepers and farmers. "He had a *genteel* day of it!" writes one of them; "not a coat there but freize, except on the platform." Meanwhile, Feargus persevered with continually increasing activity; some of the advertisements of his movements were headed with the appropriate words in huge types, "Up and doing."

Whatever were the merits or defects of his public speaking, he had this advantage—that his manner and delivery were perfectly gentleman-like. He was thoroughly free from the odious and execrable slang which the blackguard taste of some public spouters impels them to substitute for the wit which they have not; all cant phrases he discarded; the entire slang vocabulary he utterly rejected.

The people appreciated the aristocratic demeanour of Feargus; for the Irish democracy—(and this is a feature in the national character well worthy the attention of all politicians)—are eminently aristocratic in their prepossessions. They love ancient lineage; they can quickly discern and they ardently relish the demeanour

that should mark the far-descended gentleman. Those who fear that the Repeal of the Union would result in democratic anarchy, evince by their fears their total ignorance of the feelings, dispositions, and prejudices of the Irish nation. There is not in the empire a people more desirous to give practical efficacy to the theory of the British constitution. The theoretic equipoise of Crown, Lords, and Commons, their principles would carry into practice. Loving liberty as their dearest birthright, they rejoice to be led in the pursuit of it by men of high station and old lineage. Loyal to the crown, they honour the coronet—these Irish worshippers of freedom ! They merely desire to convert the aristocracy from oppressors into protectors.

CHAPTER X.

My inmost heart is in your cause. I pray
God speed your quarrel ! Yet my hands are bound ;
There is a golden fetter that restrains
The energies that should, of right, be yours.

Anon.

Repeal was now a topic of universal interest. The Reverend Charles Boyton, a Fellow of Trinity College, made several speeches at the Dublin Conservative Society, strongly impregnated with Irish nationality. In one of those speeches he ably dissected and exposed the fallacies which even then Spring Rice had begun to set up, about "the Union being productive of incalculable benefit to Ireland." Rice had been triumphant in the English House of Commons; that is to say, he had the votes, the majorities, the cheers, which invariably await in that assembly the exploits of an Irishman who does the dirty work of England. It was easy to prove to the perfect satisfaction of an English audience that the subjugation of Ireland to England was an overflowing source of prosperity to the former country.

His miles of figures—his tables of statistics, his carefully contrived arithmetical legerdemain, made an imposing show in an assembly whose members cared nothing for the merits of the case, and cared everything for the preservation of their own iron grasp upon Irish resources.

But Rice's statistical jugglery did not prove thus convincing to the Irish people. He did not find it quite so easy to persuade *them* that their starving population were comfortably fed; that their unemployed, half-naked tradesmen were warmly clothed; that the manufactories crumbling into ruins over the face of the land were hives of happy, thriving industry; that the 14,000 silk weavers just then stalking unemployed through Dublin were models of prosperity and comfort; that the crowded metropolitan mendicity demonstrated the brisk state of trade in the capital; that the insolvency of *an entire fourth* of the number of houses in Dublin was strongly indicative of the increasing opulence of the metropolis; that the Dublin people were exceedingly enriched by the removal to London of all the public boards; and that the drain of four millions per annum in absentee rents out of Ireland, was a source of remunerative employment and national wealth to the Irish people.

All these brilliant paradoxes might easily be

received as gospel-truths by a set of Englishmen interested *only* in keeping down Ireland. But the suffering people themselves felt the poignant addition of insult to injury when they saw the great cause of their sorrows held forth to the world as the fountain of blessings to their country.

Boyton, despite his conservatism, felt as an indignant Irishman would naturally feel; and, in a speech which displayed full knowledge of the subject, he refuted with contemptuous sarcasm the fallacies of Rice. Boyton's mind and body were both of athletic powers and proportions. He had the reputation of being an able pugilist; and no doubt in his reasoning there was many a knock-down blow. The man was in spirit and feeling an Irish nationalist, but he was bound up in the chains of the Church Establishment; his national vigour was therefore necessarily paralysed.

A gentleman on terms of intimacy with the leading members of the Repeal movement, made private overtures to Boyton for a junction between his party and the Repealers. Boyton's reply was in substance, and nearly in terms, as follows :

"I would gladly acquiesce in your proposal, if I thought there existed the slightest proba-

bility of its being effectual. But were *I* publicly to unite myself with the Repealers, I should only separate myself from my own party ; I could not possibly carry them along with me. Sir, *they hate you* ; their enmity is bitter, and it cannot be mitigated. I trust I need not say that *I* do not participate in it ; but I *know* that any overtures to unite them with the O'Connellites would be perfectly fruitless, from the personal hatred they bear to your leader, and their bigoted horror of the great body of his followers."

The negotiation of course fell to the ground ; but Boyton now and then continued to make speeches savouring strongly of Repeal.

One of his best was on the celebrated interview which took place in Cork between the Lord Lieutenant* and Doctor Baldwin, a highly respected advocate of nationality. The Doctor beat the Viceroy hollow in the controversy ; and the Viceroy threatened to blockade the Irish ports with four English gun-brigs, and to effect a total suspension of intercourse between England and Ireland.

"A total suspension of intercourse !" exclaimed the Rev. Charles Boyton ; "and supposing the

* The Marquis of Anglesea.

intercourse *was* suspended, pray which of the parties would be the worse for it? England, whose exports are articles which derive their value from the great manufacturing ingenuity exerted on materials of small intrinsic worth; or Ireland, whose exports chiefly consist of articles of food—the staff of human life? If the gallant Viceroy could suspend the intercourse between the countries, and prevent our exporting Irish beef, butter, and corn to England, why I really think that in so awful an extremity we could manage to eat those commodities ourselves! Whereas it would task the powers of even John Bull to masticate and digest a Sheffield whittle, a Worcester tea-cup, or a Kidderminster carpet!"

Meanwhile, Feargus undertook to enlighten the Viceroy upon Irish affairs in a "Letter, from Feargus O'Connor, Esq., Barrister-at-Law, to his Excellency the Marquis of Anglesea." Feargus had been threatened with a prosecution for his political misdeeds; and in the indictment were included James Ludlow Stawell, of Kilbrittain,*

* I cannot thus cursorily mention James Ludlow Stawell, without a passing tribute to his memory. He was a sincere Protestant; he was also a warm-hearted and enlightened Irishman. Descended from an ancient house, and possessed of an ample estate, he felt that he owed an account of his stewardship to the Providence who had bestowed on him the gifts of high birth and large fortune. He be-

Francis Bernard M'Carthy, of Laurel Hill, with some others who had made themselves conspicuous by agitation.

The principal subject of Feargus's Letter to Lord Anglesea was Feargus himself. He apprized the Viceroy that he (Feargus) was a barrister; a member of one of the most respectable families in the kingdom; that he possessed an unincumbered property beyond his wants; that on one occasion when Lord Anglesea had been mobbed in Dublin, he (Feargus) followed him into Parliament-street and raised his arm in his Excellency's defence.

He also boasted—and with good reason—of an exploit he had performed in 1822, which in truth was creditable to his dexterity. The incident also exemplifies forcibly the amount of reliance which ought to be placed on the assertions of “State of the country” libellers of Ireland:

nestly and zealously laboured to render his own personal advantages auxiliary to the freedom of his countrymen. He threw himself into their struggle. They revered and loved him. His useful and honourable career was cut short by sudden death. A feverish cold, of which the inflammatory symptoms were increased by the patient's anxiety about the prosecution, terminated fatally on the third or fourth day. He was deeply regretted by all parties.—*Requiescat in pace!*

"The parsons," said Feargus, "were *then* with the people, proclaiming that tithes had nothing to do with the disturbance; that its cause was to be found in exorbitant rents. I convened a meeting of the neighbouring parishes in the Roman Catholic Chapel of Enniskean, at which nine or ten Protestant clergymen attended; they were principally rectors. They all spoke of the perfect tranquillity their respective parishes enjoyed, and unanimously signed the resolutions which strongly expressed that tranquillity, under the belief that they would not go farther.

"I, however, had a duty to perform. I published them in two of our provincial journals; and what will be your lordship's astonishment when I tell you that this publication was deemed by the clergy who attended the meeting, a crime for which my head would scarcely have atoned! Because the declarations made by some of those reverend gentlemen at the meeting, were diametrically opposite to those made *by the same persons* with respect to the state of their parishes, but a day or two previously!"

Feargus demanded from Lord Anglesea the publication of the informations on which he and his confederates had been charged as conspirators and dangerous persons.

The prosecutions were abandoned by the go-

vernment. Stawell had died after a few days' illness; and as his death was generally believed to have been accelerated by the harassing annoyance of the threatened proceedings, it is not improbable that the government regarded it as a sufficient expiation of the political sins of the whole batch of offenders. But the fact of having been indicted was an additional feather in Feargus's cap: his having incurred the peril of martyrdom increased his popularity.

The summer and autumn passed away. The registries had been well worked, and towards the end of December the general election took place. The second popular candidate for the county was Mr. Garrett Standish Barry of Lemlara, a Catholic gentleman of great private worth, but not adapted for public business. He was brought in for the county under Feargus's wing; being in truth indebted for his success to the stirring agitation got up by his active and adventurous colleague.

The electors from the rural districts now poured into the city. Parties of the freize-coats, each detachment headed by the parish priest, came in for four successive days. On the first day of the election the rival candidates met upon the hustings; Lord Bernard and the Hon. Robert Boyle appeared on the Conservative side. The

Hon. Robert King was a candidate upon the Whig interest. Lord Bernard read a short speech from a paper which lay perdu in the bottom of his hat, all about keeping up the tithes and the Union. Happy dexterity in a public speaker, thus to make his hat supply the deficiencies of his head ! Mr. Boyle—I really forget whether he uttered anything at all ; he wrote an address to the electors which promised nothing—a promise which there is no doubt of his ability to redeem ! Mr. King said that if returned he would vote for the discussion of Repeal. Garrett Standish Barry said that if the reformed Parliament in their first session should not do “justice to Ireland,” he would vote for Repeal. Fear-gus made an extremely eloquent speech for “full, unqualified, unconditional, immediate Repeal.”

The election terminated on the fifth day, in the return of Fear-gus and Mr. Barry. Out of the eight seats for the city, the county, and its boroughs, the Tories only obtained one, namely Bandon, for which the Hon. William Bernard was returned. The Tories were infarate at the success of their opponents. Speaking of Fear-gus’s triumph, the well-known Hedges Eyre of Macroom swore deep and awful oaths as he paced the Conservative club-room, “that the county was lost ! destroyed ! disgraced for ever !”

Whatever may be Feargus's subsequent career, we must do justice to his really gallant achievement of wresting the county Cork from the families who had monopolized the representation prior to 1832. The task required indefatigable energy, a thorough contempt of all difficulties, a faculty of rousing the despondent and nearly torpid population with fiery harangues, an undaunted audacity, and a superlative self-confidence. All these qualities Feargus enjoyed in perfection, and without them he never could have succeeded in displacing the old parliamentary families. The people were fascinated, too, at seeing the marked and respectful deference with which the Protestant agitator invariably treated the Catholic priesthood, to whom he never omitted an occasion of paying a well-turned compliment. He bragged loudly and constantly of his own aboriginal extraction; adverted frequently to the losses his family had sustained in the people's cause; and succeeded in producing a general conviction that the dashing, voluble, swaggering champion of the people rights, was the very beau ideal of a popular member of parliament. Feargus's services were on that occasion very great. The truth is, that no other man in Corkshire possessed the combination of qualities requisite to open the county at that period.

Since the year 1832, the popular franchise in Ireland has shrunk into very small dimensions. In some places it is nearly annihilated. This result has been produced by the strenuous efforts of Conservative landlords to recover their lost political ground, and the coldness and apathy with which Whig-liberal proprietors often suffer the franchise to die out. The Tories expel refractory tenants in large batches, wherever the termination of leases affords them the power of clearance.*

The conduct of the humble electors of Ireland contrasts most remarkably with that of the same class of persons in England. The contrast appears to me demonstrative of the superior fitness of the Irish people to exercise the franchise.

In England, as Lord Stanley has boasted in the house of commons, the tenantry follow their landlords with implicit submission. They inquire for "my lord's man," or "the squire's man," and they vote as their masters direct. In the towns venality is the dominant influence. Between town and country there never existed a parliament returned by so enormous, so unblush-

* This practice is general, but not universal. Some Tory proprietors are amongst the best and most humane landlords in Ireland. Whigs too often patronize the "clearance system."

ing a use of bribery and all corrupt influence as the present English House of Commons.

In Ireland, neither landlord-influence nor bribes can accomplish much. The electors are not driven like swine to the market. They have got a political conscience, and by that they are guided in the use of the franchise. Whether their political preferences are right or wrong, they honestly vote according to those preferences. Year after year they see before their eyes the bitter penalty of being politically honest ; they see the old homesteads of their neighbours levelled to the earth, and the miserable inmates turned adrift, to wander in cold, nakedness, and hunger over the land—they see that the crime of which *this* is the punishment, is the honest discharge of a trust committed to them by the constitution—and yet they persevere !

There is in this gallant defiance of local tyranny, something grand and high-souled. It stamps the Irish peasants with the ineffaceable character of political integrity. They are willing martyrs for their country's freedom. A nation who can thus perseveringly and readily incur the bitterest persecution for the sake of principle, stand infinitely higher in the moral and intellectual scale, and are infinitely fitter for the duties of self-government, than a people who

discharge the constitutional trust of the franchise at the dictation of another's will, or for the sordid and dishonest consideration of pelf.

Apart from bribery, and with reference solely to the landlord-influence over electors in England, it must, however, be admitted that the English voters have not the same reason for opposing their landlords that the Irish voters too often have.

Whatever be the political party of the English candidate, the elector may be perfectly certain that he is zealous for the honour and power of England. Whig, Tory, or Radical, he will equally desire to uphold the glory of the British lion.

But in Ireland, the nationalist elector is frequently called on to vote for a candidate zealous only for the servitude and subjugation of his country; eager to revile and disparage her creed and her people; flippant to announce (as Lord Wicklow did the other day) that there is not in Ireland the material for self-legislation. He is called on to vote for some person whose entire political convictions originate in the false, degrading, calumnious, self-stultifying principle, that the land of Swift, and Grattan, and Flood, and Hussey Burgh, and O'Connell, and Plunkett, and Bushe, and a host of names which shed lustre upon human intellect, is inhabited by a

race incapable of making laws to govern themselves!

The soul of the Irish peasant instinctively spurns the impudent libel on his country. There cannot be a cordial community of feeling between the peasantry and the landlord-class, until the owners of the soil learn to regard their native land with sentiments of just respect; until they learn to rejoice in Ireland's honour—to take pride in Ireland's fame; and to feel every insult to their country as a foul indignity inflicted on themselves.

Vicious and deeply-rooted prejudices require time to eradicate; but there is a generation springing rapidly up into maturity who, under God, are destined to behold this change.

CHAPTER XI.

Each voice should resound through our island,
“ You’re my neighbour; but, BULL, this is *my* land,
Nature’s favorite spot,
And I’d rather be shot,
Than surrender the rights of our island.”

Lysaght's anti-Union Song.

O’Connell suggested in December, 1832, to the members who were pledged to the Repeal of the Union, the expediency of meeting in Dublin to discuss various matters connected with Irish legislation. Between thirty and forty of them accordingly assembled in January, 1833, under the denomination of the National Council. Their first meeting took place at Home’s Hotel in College-Green, directly facing the principal front of the Irish House of Commons. The proximity was suggestive of some mournful recollections, associated however with proud resolves and hopes. The forms of a legislative assembly were strictly observed by the National Council. The first day was chiefly occupied in the examination of Michael Staunton, the very able editor of the Dublin *Register*, on matters concerning the

financial concerns of Ireland. On the subsequent days the members met in the Great Room of the Corn Exchange ; there was a “stranger’s gallery,” and a “bar;” admission to which was charged the parliamentary price of two-and-six-pence. O’Connell’s object in bringing together this embryo parliament, was partly to present to the people of Ireland the spectacle of their own legislators deliberating on Irish affairs in the capital of their native land ; to habituate the members to home service ; and thereby to excite both the representatives and the represented to continuous energy in the great national enterprise.

“The cork” (said the Dublin *Evening Post*) “was flying out of Feargus’s high-bottled eloquence;” and at the National Council, as also upon some other public occasions in the capital, Feargus well sustained the reputation he had acquired in the south, of a ready, rattling speaker.

In parliament he was not so successful. True, he talked away in “the house” with his customary fluency, but he failed in impressing the public with any strong faith in his senatorial wisdom. He amused the legislature with local anecdotes, sometimes extremely well told. He amused them also with occasional outbursts of exaggerated energy ; as, for example, when in the

debate on the Coercion Bill some foolish English member had blustered about opposing the Repeal *vi et armis*, Feargus resolved to outbluster him ; which he did after the following fashion :

“ The honourable gentleman,” said the member for Cork county, “ had declared that rather than consent to the Repeal of the Union he would submit to be pistoled and bayoneted. But he (Mr. Feargus O’Connor) would reply, that rather than submit to the oppression of Ireland, he would readily encounter swords, bayonets, guns, pistols, blunderbusses, muskets, and fire-arms of all sorts.”

But to do Feargus justice, he often uttered very good liberal principles, and he gave occasional expression to bold and spirited sentiments of liberty. He was deficient in argument. His speeches were what the French expressively term *inconsequent*.

In 1833 he made an effort to force forward the discussion of Repeal prematurely in the House of Commons. O’Connell was desirous to keep back the question until the organization of the Irish repealers should have become more effective and general. There had been undoubtedly a great deal of popular noise and excitement ; but O’Connell did not deem that the people had yet been sufficiently organized to enable them to

give to their representatives that steady and sustained support out of doors which was absolutely necessary to the success of the question in Parliament. O'Connell, in this cautious policy, could appeal to the authority of the venerable Henry Grattan; who, when in 1810 announcing to the people of Dublin his readiness to advocate Repeal, at the same time explicitly stated that "it would be neither prudent nor possible to bring Repeal into the House of Commons, until the question should be backed by the whole Irish nation." Feargus, however, overlooked all such considerations, and announced to the Repealers that if O'Connell should decline to lead them, *he* would himself become their leader!

Notwithstanding this intrepid announcement, he was fortunately induced to withdraw the notice he had given upon the subject. He, however, had succeeded in exciting the popular impatience for a parliamentary discussion; so that O'Connell found it requisite to bring forward the question in the following session.* Feargus made a very long speech *about* Repeal, in the debate, but it did not touch the marrow of the subject.

Parliament being dissolved in December, 1834,

* O'Connell's motion was made 22nd April, 1834.

Feargus again was returned for the county of Cork. In his address to the electors he declared his intention of excluding for the future the *new* families (*videlicet* the Shannons, Kingstons, and Bandons) from the representation ; and on the hustings he told Lord Bernard that the best blood in his lordship's veins was derived from an ancient Kerry strain, a connexion with the O'Connor family.

Feargus's majority was on this occasion large ; but not so overwhelming as it had been at the previous election. The landlord-persecution had already begun to work upon the county-franchise. A petition against his return was briskly undertaken ; he was unseated in June, 1835, and Mr. Longfield of Longueville near Mallow, slipped into the representation.

Feargus had evidently conceived the idea of supplanting O'Connell in the leadership of the Irish people ; and in furtherance of this project he now published a pamphlet containing numerous allegations of political dishonesty against the Liberator. The pamphlet sold well among the Conservative party ; but it alienated the Repealers of Ireland from its writer.

Before long he formed a connexion with a political society in London, of whom the Rev. Dr. Wade was a member. The principles of this

society were those now known as the “five points of the charter.” He soon established in Leeds the *Northern Star*, a weekly newspaper, which, being cleverly edited, at one period reached an enormous circulation, and still circulates very extensively, although it has declined from the culminating point. He became a leading apostle of “Chartism,” of which his newspaper was the official gazette; and many of the traits of the proprietor are amusingly chronicled in its columns; they are worth preserving from their racy peculiarity.

One curious mode of extending his influence was, by having the infant children of his followers christened after his name. A string of such baptisms was for a long time to be found in each successive *Star*; as, for example—“On Monday, the 8th instant, the wife of Ichabod Jenkins, sailor, was delivered of a fine thriving boy, who was christened Feargus O’Connor Ichabod,” and so on for the best part of a column. Girls were also often christened after Feargus. A whole population of Feargus O’Connors, male and female, seemed rapidly springing up; and the lists of these baptisms were invariably headed with the words, “More Young Patriots.”

There was also a religious institution got up, under the name of the “Chartist Christian

Church;" and I presume that the Mr. Cooper who combines, in the following extract, the celebration of Feargus's humility with the baptism of one of the young patriots, was a minister of that society:

"We learn from the *Leicester Mercury*, that Mr. Thomas Cooper, the leader of the O'Connorites in that borough, preached a sermon in the Amphitheatre on Sunday week, from Daniel, ii. 34, 35. In the course of his address he said— 'The disciples of truth, and all great men, were humble, and did not like to have others depreciated for the purpose of exalting themselves;' and, as instances, he noticed Sir Isaac Newton, Haydn, Mozart, and Feargus O'Connor. After the sermon, he announced that the Tragedy of Douglas would be performed on the following Tuesday, and that Hamlet was in preparation. He then baptized a child 'Feargus O'Connor Cooper Beedham.'"^{*}

Ordinary agitators had for a long time adopted the system of banners at their public processions. The original genius of Chartism, however, for once discarded such ensigns as stale, flat, and commonplace, and in lieu thereof, startled

* *Dublin Evening Post*, 3rd January, 1843.

the crowd at a meeting in Burnley, with an infinitely grander conception ;

"The attention of the multitude was arrested by the ascent of a large balloon, with the words 'FEARGUS O'CONNOR,' inscribed in large characters."

Banners, however, were admitted in other localities. On a banner of stupendous dimensions at one of O'Connor's processions, were inscribed the following stanzas :

" Lo ! he comes ! he comes !
Garlands for every shrine ;
Sound trumpets ! strike the drums,
Strew roses—pour the wine !

" Swell—swell the Dorian flute,
Triumphal to the sky ;
Let the millions' shout salute,
For THE PATRIOT passes by."

Feargus now seemed to sweep through the world in the midst of a continuous triumph. Garlands, libations, Io Poëans ! It was like the majestic advance of one of Homer's demigods. But Feargus was not exalted by these celestial honours above the old terrestrial mode of dealing with political questions *par voie du fait* ; and accordingly, when confined at a subsequent period in York Castle for certain alleged misdemeanours, he published "An appeal to the

working men of Yorkshire" to obstruct by violence the proceedings of a meeting at which O'Connell was expected to be present at Leeds. The appeal was exceedingly vehement, and much of it was eloquently written. He inquired whether if *he* were at large, would O'Connell dare to come to Leeds to meet him ? And to this query he replied in the negative—"No ! a million times no !" He then urged the great debt the Yorkshire Chartists owed to himself, and declared that all would be cancelled, nay, infinitely overpaid, if "*they gave O'Connor his day, and Dan his welcome!*" The conclusion of this eloquent incitement to a row, is extremely characteristic ;

"I live and reign," says Feargus, "in the hearts of millions, who pant for an opportunity to prove their love, and who will embrace that which is now presented, to convince me of their approbation of my honest endeavours to serve the cause of universal freedom.

"I am, my friends and brothers, the Tyrant's Captive, the Oppressor's Dread ! the Poor Man's Friend, *and the people's Accepted Present,*

"FEARGUS O'CONNOR."

The people, however, did not respond to any great extent to the belligerent call of their Accepted Present. It was supposed or promised,

that 100,000 Chartist would assemble to oppose O'Connell ; but the contemporary journals state that from two to three thousand at the utmost, gathered upon Holbeck Moor.

Feargus's imprisonment in York Castle was not only unmerited, but his treatment at first was atrociously severe. He published in the newspapers statements of the barbarous indignities inflicted upon him. In a letter to the *Times*, he expressed a fear that the prison discipline would shorten his existence ; and desired, should such be the case, that his body, after death, should be opened by three surgeons whom he named ; one residing at York, another at Hammersmith, and the third in London. Ere the end of the epistle, however, Feargus evidently thought that it would be better to live for future political squalls than to die in jail for a *post mortem* examination ;

"Adieu, world !" he concludes, "for seventeen months ; but, by heaven ! I'll make a storm in you yet !"

Feargus early acquired a decided supremacy amongst the apostles of Chartism. Joining the body as a volunteer, he speedily worked himself into the supreme command, although he had several competitors of by no means contemptible ability.

A Chartist gentleman once said to me, "He began with us as a disciple; but, egad! sir, he soon distanced all of us!"

His sway seems, however, at present, to be rendered uneasy by the encroachments of his mutinous subjects.

In the *Evening Star*—a sort of adjunct to the *Northern Star*, and, like it, edited for a time by Feargus—an amusing writer published a series of sketches of the Chartist leaders, commencing with a portrait of the Chartist chief. This writer, describing an interview with Feargus and a Scotch Chartist leader named MacDouall, acquaints us that the latter gentleman claimed a diabolical pedigree. "'Son of the devil,' said the gallant little doctor, 'is the meaning of my surname.'" "'And I am a lineal descendant from Roderick O'Connor, the last king of all Ireland!' said Feargus, kindled into a momentary pride of ancestry by this flash of the untameable spirit in the brave Scot; 'there were five kings of Ireland, all O'Connors, at the same time, but I am lineally descended from Roderick the Ardagh, or high king. You see in me a specimen of what my countrymen of the true Milesian descent would all have been, had it not been for the dwarfing effects of bad living and ill-treatment.'"

It would seem that in thus offering himself as a specimen of the splendid proportions to which his countrymen might, if unpersecuted, have arrived, Feargus produced on the narrator an impression that he was, in truth, a being of mysterious and undefinable greatness :

" From that period," continues the writer, " I have never seen O'Connor without regarding myself as in the presence of a true representative of the ancient Celtic chieftains ; beings who depicture themselves to us out of the mist of time, as characterized by simple and unaffected majesty of form and deportment, without the adornments of civilization, the frippery of jewels, crowns, and sceptres." The writer ends by remarking that the " reality of O'Connor's greatness, as a devotee of principle," overawed his enemies.

The above is doubtless very complimentary ; not more so, however, than Feargus himself could be on appropriate occasions. There is in Dublin a Mr. Patrick O'Higgins who got up a nibbling opposition to O'Connell, and devoted a room at the back of his house to the reception of a few discontented deserters from O'Connellism. Mr. O'Higgins professed himself an ally of Feargus, and promised to do wonders for Chartist in Dublin. Feargus acknowledged his me-

rits in the *Star*, and ended an eloquent eulogium by exclaiming—"Rome had her Brutus—Ireland has her O'Higgins!"

The parallel is exquisite!

When Joseph Sturge was candidate for Nottingham on the principles of moral force Chartism, Feargus gave him active assistance in the preliminary agitation. An affray took place in the market-square of Nottingham, in which Feargus displayed strength and valour truly worthy of the descendant of the Ardrigh Roderick; for although beset by numbers upon every side, he knocked all down right and left. Next day twenty-one men swore that Feargus had severally knocked each of them down in the riot. The *Univers* translated the English accounts of the transaction into French, heading the narrative, "Mœurs Electorales Anglaises."

At one of the meetings for the Nottingham election, Feargus exclaimed, "Hurrah for Sturge and Nottingham! or *for the Devil*, if he supports the charter!" I should like to have seen the quiet quaker-face of honest Joseph Sturge, on being thus hypothetically coupled with the prince of darkness. Perhaps the "hurrah for the devil" was intended as a compliment to his infernal majesty's relative Dr. M'Douall.

The reports of O'Connor's meetings and speech.

es in the *Star* are full of traits illustrating that wild energy which forms so marked a feature in his character. We are told how he sat down after a two hours' speech so exhausted that the perspiration oozed through his dress!—how he said “he would work the flesh off his bones, or have the Charter!”—how he cheered his followers by declaring that “he was as strong as ten bulls!”—how he described Lane-End as the place where the lads “beat the cavalry and made them retreat;” adding, “in this town all the people are born marksmen. I learn that a lad of fourteen or fifteen could kill a crow flying, with a stone.”

I have not deemed this digression—for it is one—altogether uninteresting; relating, as it does, to the personal characteristics of a man who was at one time a useful auxiliary to the popular cause in Ireland, and who certainly possesses a large share of talent of a not very common description.

With respect to Chartism, the political changes it professes to seek are just and necessary on the whole, although some of their details might be advantageously modified. The Repeal of the Union is one of the “five points.”

That the Chartist movement has not been favourably looked on by the Irish people, arises

170 OBSTRUCTIVE POLICY OF CHARTISTS.

from the distrust with which some of the leaders are regarded in this country, and from the unfair and intolerant policy repeatedly pursued by the party, of violently obstructing all meetings held for any other political object than the attainment of the Charter.

CHAPTER XII.

Justice hath done her unrelenting part,
If she indeed be justice, who drives on,
Bloody and blind, the chariot wheels of death.

Southey.

The proceedings of “The First Reformed Parliament” furnished a conclusive answer to those Irish Whig-liberals who opposed Repeal upon the plea that Reform in the English Parliament would supersede the necessity for domestic legislation for Ireland.

The Irish agitation in 1831-2 was not opposed by the Whig government so long as it could be considered a useful adjunct to the English agitation for Reform. But as soon as the triumph of Reform was certain, and the Irish agitators were no longer required to subserve English purposes, prosecutions were threatened —Lord Anglesea proclaimed down meetings; the “Sailor-King,” whose impatience to achieve Reform in 1831 was so great that he wanted to drive down to the house in a “jarvey” to dissolve the refractory Parliament—this same democratic

monarch in 1833 expressed from the throne his "surprise" and "indignation" at the efforts of the Irish to obtain a restoration of their own legislature.

O'Connell denounced the King's speech as a brutal and bloody speech; as a declaration of war against Ireland. The address, echoing the speech, was however carried by an enormous majority. The Coercion Bill for restricting the people of Ireland from meeting to petition the legislature was shortly afterwards introduced. There was a very full muster of Irish and English members on the night of its introduction. Expectation was on tiptoe—it had been rumoured that disclosures of an appalling nature would be made to justify its enactment. Lord Althorp (now Lord Spencer) opened the case for the Government. His delivery was heavy, hesitating, and unimpressive. He laboured under a disadvantage which in an impartial assembly would have been fatal; namely that of requiring implicit belief in a tale of Irish outrages and horrors, in which the names of the informers were to a great extent suppressed. The house was called upon to ground coercive legislation upon unauthenticated charges; and the pretext for withholding the authentication was, that to publish the names of the informers

would expose them to personal outrage from their lawless neighbours.

The house was perfectly ready to ground coercive legislation for Ireland upon anonymous information. It was not nice as to pretexts. It was boldly alleged that praedial outrages were closely allied with political agitation, and that in order to put down the former the latter should be suppressed.

Lord Althorp's speech was a failure. O'Connell left the house immediately on its conclusion, and remained for some minutes in the lobby, offering triumphant congratulations to all the anti-coercion members whom he met, on the wretched exhibition of his lordship. "Did you ever hear anything more miserable? Why, the government have literally got no case at all! Bad as the house is, it will be impossible to get them to pass the bill on such statements! Hurrah!" Thus did the Great Dan cheer the members of the Tail and his friends in general; expressing in the most sanguine terms his conviction of the ultimate defeat of the government.

By-and-bye Mr. (now Lord) Stanley rose. He enjoyed one great advantage; namely that of having an audience strongly predisposed in his favour. But in other respects he laboured under difficulties. He had, in fact, to repair

Lord Althorp's failure. He had to re-state a series of allegations which had fallen, feeble and dull, from the incompetent lips of the blundering leader. And well did he perform his task! Ere he had spoken for five minutes, the attention of friend and foe alike was riveted in admiration of the orator's abilities. Clear, rapid, and animated, he scathed the Liberals with the fire of his sarcasm, and combated their arguments with his showy and plausible parliamentary logic. The natural graces of his unconstrained and easy action, the vivid glances of his eagle eye, the air of bold and well sustained defiance which no one could better assume, greatly enhanced the effect of his oratory. He had gathered up some of the unconsidered sayings of his Irish antagonists, and paraded them before the house with wicked ingenuity as indicative of seditious intentions. He closed with a ferocious invective against O'Connell personally, and sat down amidst thunders of Whig and Tory plaudits.

Well did he merit the cheers of his party. The rickety misshapen bantling of Lord Althorp was moulded by the plastic powers of Mr. Stanley into showy proportions and apparent strength.

The bill was obstinately contested. Mr. O'Connell led the opposition to it, and displayed all the qualities of a great parliamentary debater. An

Irish Conservative exclaimed with astonishment to the present writer as the house adjourned one night, "How stoutly Dan battles it out amongst these English!" O'Connell had, in the course of the evening, thus concluded a fiery invective against the Whigs: "You have brains of lead, and hearts of stone, and fangs of iron!" He displayed inimitable tact and dexterity in defence—promptitude and vigour in assault—and knocked about Whigs and Tories with an easy exercise of strength which utterly astonished the house, who had not previously witnessed such a brilliant display of his abilities.

Despite the opposition of the friends of Ireland, the bill finally passed, and the constitutional privileges of the Irish people were temporarily invaded; ostensibly to check praedial disturbance, but in reality to thwart the agitation for Repeal. Mr. Stanley had boasted that he would make his government feared before it should be loved. He did not make it either feared or loved; he only succeeded in making it hated.

The crime thus committed against Ireland was aggravated by the fact that it emanated from the English Reformers in the full flush and heyday of their triumph. The first use the friends of English liberty made of their great victory, was to crush the constitutional freedom of their Irish

176 COERCION POWERLESS AGAINST REPEAL.

fellow-subjects ! What a pregnant lesson to Irish-men ! What a practical commentary on the doctrine of imperial identification !

The Repealers were angry, but not depressed. If agitation was suspended for a season, its objects and purposes survived with undiminished vitality and vigour in the affections of the people.

Affairs, however, wore a very dreary aspect. There was a cessation of the cheering, spirit-stirring, political activity which had enlivened the preceding year ; whilst the Catholic tenantry were in many districts mercilessly scourged for their anti-tithe and anti-Union offences.

CHAPTER XIII.

They came in the morning, scoffing and scorning,
Saying, " Were you harassed ? were you sore abused ?"
Oh, Orange haters, ye beat the traitors
That betrayed our Saviour to the wicked Jews.

Rockite Song, from Westminster Review.

The exertions made by the rural voters to return members of their own political principles at the general election in 1832, drew down upon their heads terrible vengeance from the anti-Repeal landlord party. I have two "cleared" districts at this moment before me ; that is, districts from which the Catholic tenantry have been swept out to make room for a docile Protestant colony. The townlands—respectively named Castletown and Shanavagh—are situated in the county Cork, and are part of the estate of a noble Earl of high Tory politics and warm evangelic zeal.

It is right to premise that the landlord, in the present instance, appears to have acted from religious enthusiasm—not from political resent-

ment ; for the ejected occupiers had not registered their votes. But expulsion is the same—whether proceeding from fanatical ardour or political vengeance. I have selected the townlands in question, because, from their proximity to my residence, I have had access to the best information respecting them.

It may not be amiss to devote a few sentences to the past and present memoranda of these districts ; the rather, as the tale, with a few slight changes, is that of many a spot in Ireland. Instruction sometimes lurks in the simple records of the poor.

Kinneigh, the parish in which Castletown is situated, is a wild upland tract, rising into abrupt and rocky eminences abounding in furze and coarse herbage. The hills are savage without grandeur ; there is nothing picturesque in their outlines, and none of them ascend to any considerable elevation. There is a barn-like church ; and in its immediate vicinity stands one of the inexplicable round towers, seventy feet high : this tower is the only thing in the parish worth looking at. A strange, stern old monument it is, of days so long gone by that man's memory retains no trace of their annals.

Having mentioned the church, I may as well waste a few words in commemoration of an an-

cient parson, about ten years deceased, by whom the church-goers of Kinneigh were for a long time illuminated.

This gentleman—the Rev. Gilbert Laird—dropped into the parish, no one could tell whence, some forty or fifty years ago. All that the Protestant parishioners knew about the matter was, that a queer-looking little brown bunch of a man whose appearance bore some resemblance to that minute variety of the porcine species, a hedgehog, suddenly appeared in the pulpit one day, and delivered a discourse containing nothing very good; nothing very bad; nothing, in short, about which anybody who heard it could predicate any quality in particular. The slight curiosity which was excited by the first appearance of the new parson soon died away, when it was found that all inquiry as to his origin, birth-place, former associates or habits, was perfectly fruitless. On all these matters he preserved to the end of his days an impenetrable silence. He bore with him due credentials from the absentee rector, so that his title to the curacy was undoubted and unquestionable; and *that*, he conceived, was all that his flock were entitled to know. He continued to officiate and to preach: the only effusion of his pulpit eloquence which yet survives in the parochial memory, is a discourse from the nursery

fable of the Industrious Ant and Idle Grass-hopper, with appropriate amplifications from the preacher himself. The Reverend Gilbert became a favourite with one or two squires who played backgammon and lived loose, rollicking lives ; he rattled the dice with more sociability than he had displayed in any other occupation ; and (although perfectly free from vice himself) he did not annoy his patrons with many troublesome moral remonstrances. By-and-bye the queer little man became a sort of favourite. Whimsical stories were told of him ; people were amused with his odd habits ; such as getting his bed thrashed with short flails every morning by the housemaids, and his sleeping with a bolster at the bed-foot in order to accommodate himself in the event of his choosing to reverse the relative positions of his head and feet during the night. His penurious style of living also furnished matter for irreverent jests. He existed on the smallest possible modicum of his salary as curate ; and the residue he regularly invested in the purchase of a life annuity. The entire income arising from these investments, he invested again ; so that if the insurance offices had given him ten thousand per cent., they would have still been clear gainers by their singular annuitant. Thus he went on, investing and re-investing ; and he

flattered himself with the agreeable notion of enjoying the income thus created by the time it should reach £500 per annum.

He continued unmarried until the age of eighty-seven. He then united himself with a lady who was about fifty years his junior. The union was not happy, for he bitterly reproached the bride with her deception in concealing the mal-formation of her left foot; which deformity he had not discovered until after the matrimonial knot was irrevocably fastened. He did not long survive the discovery; and he now reposes in one of the graveyards of the city of Cork.

The old gentleman, although far from being a model clergyman, yet possessed the negative merit of doing no mischief.

Such was the pastor to whose care the souls of the Protestants of Kinneigh were for many years committed. Whilst the spiritual interests of his small flock flourished under his tutelage, the temporal concerns of the Catholics were not in a very prosperous condition. They held the land from a middleman who was the immediate tenant of the noble Earl already alluded to. Some of them paid their rents from the proceeds of illicit distillation; and the necessary consequence of such a system was the demoralizing of the parish to a considerable extent. The trick and chicane in-

dispensable to those who carry on a contraband trade are not its worst moral results. Men who live in habitual defiance of the law become desperate, and blood has been shed in that unhappy district in defence of the pottheen stills. Undoubtedly the whole blame of these evils should not be cast upon the people. Those squires and squireens who encouraged their traffic by becoming their customers are to a great extent culpable.*

Let it not however be supposed that Castletown was an unmitigated pandemonium of pottheen desperadoes. There were many of the inhabitants who had nothing to do with the stills, and who were in truth of very fair average characters.

* The manœuvres of distillers to smuggle their whiskey have often displayed much inventive genius. A celebrated Dublin distiller continued for a long time to baffle the officers of excise, by sending out large quantities of spirits "that had never seen a guager's face" in tin cases which were made to resemble in shape the natural protuberance of a pregnant woman, and which were worn by accommodating damsels under their clothes. At last, the distiller, growing bold from the frequent success of the experiment, tried his device on too extensive a scale. The suspicions of a knowing guager were excited on seeing *thirty-six women, all enceinte*, in Mr. * * *'s premises. The guager poked their persons with his wand! and speedily ascertained that the apparent fecundity of the fair phalanx was in truth derived from thirty-six tin vessels cunningly fitted to their persons, the contents of which were speedily seized in his Majesty's name!

The middleman from whom the people held their farms died; and their leases all expired with him. His term was for his own life; the townland at his death reverted to the Earl of Bandon. Here was a glorious opportunity to plant a Protestant colony! The noble earl rejoiced with exceeding great joy at the facilities now presented of serving an ejectment on Idolatry and Wafer-worship, and inducting a colony of True Believers into the evacuated district. The expulsion of so many families excited public interest; the Earl of Mulgrave mentioned the circumstance in the House of Lords, and was coolly informed by the noble perpetrator, that his (Lord Mulgrave's) sympathy was quite thrown away, inasmuch as all the old occupants of the townland were at that moment snugly enjoying their ancient homes unmolested: the real fact being, that they had all received notice to quit, but the notices had not then yet taken effect! The time of ejectment soon arrived; and speedily afterwards the aboriginal "Brallaghans and Callaghans" gave way to the new tribes of Hosfords, Applebys, Swantons, Dawleys, Burchells, et cetera. Three of the former occupants were permitted to retain a portion of their holdings: of these, a man named Hurly sought favour with the noble proprietor by promising to abjure Po-

pery, and to astound the Castletownians with the vigour and purity of his Protestantism. The man accordingly went to the Protestant church, pursuant to his bargain ; but conceiving that a domestic affliction—the idiocy of his son—was a mark of the divine vengeance at his change, he has, I am informed, threatened to return to his former creed.

The whole machinery of proselytism was soon set to work at Castletown and Shanavagh. Reverend personages exhorted—readers and teachers besieged the Catholics on highways and by-ways—schools were erected, to which some of the not yet extirpated Papists gave their trembling and reluctant attendance. The noble Earl's family occasionally visited these schools to watch the expansion of the nascent gospel seed, and to accelerate the process of its ripening by the warmth and light of their countenances. They are, I have no doubt, sincere enthusiasts ; and when we consider the vast influence their station and fortune if properly used might invest them with, it is truly deplorable to witness the direction their zeal has taken ; to contrast what they *are* with what they *might be* ; to see them take their stand in the front ranks of the anti-national interest, instead of being the honoured, cherished leaders of their countrymen to national independence !

At Shanavagh the politico-religious movement produced its natural results. A man named Hurly, (a suspicious patronymic, it would seem, in these districts,) attended the school with great assiduity, and after a due course of instruction, professed his willingness to attend the Protestant church.

He accordingly became an established church-going Protestant. His new confreres were immensely edified by his adhesion ; they thought that a valuable fish had been hooked.

One day a farmer, well known to me for many years, met this convert on the road, and asked him wherefore he had quitted his earlier faith to adopt Protestantism ?

“Musha, God help us !” responded the convert, “I have got a small family to support, and I thought by *turning* I could maybe get a lase of the ould ground from Lord Bandon.”

“But you’d lose your poor soul ?” remonstrated the other.

“Och, maybe not—may be not. I expect God won’t take me so short entirely but that I may quit them all and go back to mass once more afore I die.”

“Anyhow,” resumed Mr. Hurly’s monitor, “you commit a great sin by going every Sunday to their church and passing yourself off as a Protestant.”

"Not as great as you think," replied the convert. "Whisper!—I don't mind their prayers a pinch of snuff! and while the clargymen is preaching, I don't hearken to his talk at all at all, but I keep praying to God Almighty as hard as I can all the time, to pardon my poor sinful sowl for going among such a set!"

Some time subsequently to the above conversation (which I took down from the lips of one of the parties), Mr. Hurly's duplex policy was curiously exhibited. He fell ill, and being afraid of death, despatched a messenger to bring the parish priest to administer the last rites of the Catholic church. "But, hark ye!" added the politic invalid, "tell his reverence not to come up here till after dark for fear any of the Protestants should see him and tell the parson."

Mr. Hurly had considered his alternative—death—then popery and Father O'Sullivan—but if he should recover, then Protestantism and another attempt to conciliate his landlord's patronage. The priest informed me that he refused to attend him; stating that his pertinacious duplicity at that awful period totally disqualified him from the profitable reception of the rites of the church. He recovered, and has since then attended the Protestant place of worship; but although he is still permitted to occupy his farm,

he has not yet, as I can learn, obtained a lease of it. Within the last few months he sent an infant child to the priest to be christened; the child was smuggled in a covered basket to escape the observation of the Protestants.*

* Whilst these sheets are passing through the press, public attention has become excited by the case, tried at the Tralee assizes, of the Rev. Charles Gayer, one of the leaders of a proselytizing establishment at Dingle, *versus* Patrick Robert Byrne, proprietor of the *Kerry Examiner* newspaper. The defendant was convicted of what, in the rigid acceptation of the law, was deemed libel; but the organized system of rank bribery to proselyte the Catholics which the evidence disclosed, has, I trust, received a salutary check from the publicity thus entailed upon it. TIMOTHY LYNCH, a witness, and ex-devant convert, deposed that he got from Gayer the sum of £12 : 10s. "and two half crowns," as the price of his adhesion. EDWARD HUSSEY, another witness, also deposed to having received money from Gayer in consideration of his becoming a Protestant! JOHN POWER, a fish-jolter, deposed to having received from Gayer "about £5 or £6" for a similar consideration. THOMAS HOOGAN deposed that he had got from Gayer seventeen shillings in two different sums, and two pecks of potatoes; and a house rent free from another proselyte named Moriarty; in consideration of which benefits he became a Protestant. JAMES KEARNEY, another convert, deposed that the considerations for which he conformed, were plentiful employment and good wages from Gayer, and a house and garden rent free; "*he never paid a farthing rent; taxes and all are paid for him; has a garden behind the house the same way, and everyone else has the same; none of them pay any rent.*" MAURICE POWER, a second fish-jolter, deposed to having bargained with Gayer to become a Protestant for the price of a horse to carry his fish. These statements were uncontradicted by Gayer, who was in court during the trial; and some of them (such as that of the houses being rent free for converts) were of such a nature as from the public notoriety of the facts, rendered denial in *Kerry* impossible.

188 CHARACTER OF THE PARSONS—THEIR FEARS.

It is but justice to say that the Protestant clergy of the district are men of exemplary purity. They—in common with their brethren all over the kingdom—are startled at the march of nationality; they tremble for the stability of their Zion; at least for the stability of its temporalities. Hence their itching and uneasy zeal to make an inroad on the enemy's territories. I suppose Mr. Hurly's conversion has long since formed an item in some exulting

It is difficult to resist a smile at the exquisitely ludicrous character of the proselytizing system, thus exhibited on the uncontradicted oaths of competent witnesses. But the horrible moral results of that system—the spiritual recklessness which it necessarily engenders—suggest solemn and mournful reflections. The total insensibility to real religious conviction of what nature soever; the organized hypocrisy superinduced by the traffick of the people with the “Dingle Mission,” appears in the following extremely grotesque but characteristic incident: A batch of fifteen of Gayer’s proselytes, finding their adhesion to church Protestantism less profitable than they had expected, turned off en masse to the Rev. Mr. M’Manus, Presbyterian Minister at Milltown, *and inquired what terms he would give them for becoming Presbyterians!*

In Moliere’s *Bourgeois Gentilhomme*, COYREL denies that Mons. JOURDAIN’s father was a linen-draper; he had, indeed, from disinterested benevolence, accommodated the public with linens; and the public, from their grateful sense of his kindness, had gracefully and delicately presented him with certain moneys. On both sides it was an elevated interchange of practical philanthropy; there was nothing of traffic in the transaction!

Precisely thus do Messieurs Gayer and Company deny that they ever bribed “converts.” True, some pauperized papists from the force of sudden and simultaneous conviction, came rushing headlong

report of the progress of the gospel. He is certainly entitled to some notice if it were only for his bizarre expedient of neutralizing the iniquity of his conversion, by praying, while in church, to be forgiven for the sin of going there !

Well, Castletown was now peopled with a Protestant yeomanry. Shanavagh also was pretty well dotted with the new settlers. A sort of miniature millenium was to be exhibited amidst the Kinneigh furze-brakes for the edification of the surrounding community. The noble landlord doubtless regarded the work of his hands with benign and soothing sentiments of self-applause. But the tenants ere long disturbed his pious complacency by falling into arrears. Why should *they* live on potatoes and sour milk, as if they were no better than papists ? They occupied the same religious level with his lordship, and he should be made to know it too. They accordingly lived well ; some of them showed their own sense of their gospel-dignity by actually following the hounds on good stout

into Protestantism ; true, also, that the Protestant ministers gave money, and free houses, and employment to the converts. But there was nothing of a *quid pro quo* in the transaction ! On the one side it was conscientious adoption of religious truth ; on the other it was the most exalted benevolence and "mercy to the household of faith."

hunters : one peculiarly enthusiastic gentleman shone forth in the glory of top-boots and a red-coat ; the earl distrained his stock and crops, and set keepers to watch them ; the tenant grumbled, and muttered somewhat about becoming a Re-pealer ! Another Protestant Nimrod—Dawley—was menaced with expulsion from his farm ; whereupon, as the best revenge he could take on his lordship, he actually turned papist, and has ever since attended mass !

In sober truth, the people feel the paramount necessity of some efficient protection from the irritating persecution of which I have given a specimen. The best protection would be found in the principle of nationality. Were that hallowed principle well developed in Ireland, it would speedily absorb all wretched sectarian contentions. It would extinguish the pernicious desire to exalt any one sect at the expense of any other sect. The doings I have briefly recorded are the exploits of “the English interest” in Ireland. The people can never be prosperous or happy until the great landed proprietors cherish the Irish interest as paramount to every other.

Every unprejudiced person will concede that the interests of real religion cannot be advanced by the system of evangelical bullyism.

That much of the crime and insubordination

in Ireland has arisen from the extermination—whether pious or profane—of the inhabitants, will be readily admitted, when it is remembered that in the five years from 1838 to 1842 inclusive, no less than 356,985 persons have been turned out of their holdings by legal process, as appears from a parliamentary paper to which Mr. Sharman Crawford has called the public notice ; and further, that the "clearance" of the people goes on in an increasing ratio !

It seems a very curious and perverse fatality that the *possession* of the elective franchise, and also the *want* of it, have alike been fraught with bitter evils to the Irish peasantry. The exercise of the franchise in opposition to the landlord-will, has drawn down extermination upon tens of thousands. That the *want* of the franchise in former days also caused the expulsion of the people from the soil, appears from a statement of John Keogh's in the recently published correspondence of Burke ;

"It is a known fact," says Keogh in 1792, the year before the concession of the forty-shilling franchise, "that the Roman Catholics have been, and are, every day, turned out of very beneficial farms, deprived of the maintenance of themselves and their families, that lost their honest occupations, and the exercise (the most beneficial to the

state) of their industry and capitals, because they could not vote at an election, and to make room for those that could. A *fortiori* they have in multitudes of instances, failed to obtain leases, nor can they ever obtain them on equal terms."^{*}

It was very natural that a peasantry thus trained to look upon the franchise as conducive to their livelihood, should, on first acquiring it, have used it for several years with greater subserviency to landlord-dictation than they have done in more recent times. When political corruption was at its greatest height, the landlords occasionally disposed of their electioneering interests to the highest bidding candidate. The people saw their votes were a mere matter of traffic with their landlords. One exquisite in-

* Burke's correspondence, iv. 16.

The expedients used to manufacture voters in an emergency were sometimes very curious. The well known Mac Coghlan of the King's County, when hard pressed for a batch of electors to turn the scale in an approaching contest, granted freeholds to the requisite number of voters; the term of the leases being for the life of one *Jack Murphy*. The voters were put in possession—the election came on—and Mac Coghlan's friend, with the aid of the newly made freeholders, carried the day. Mac Coghlan, however, had not the least notion of allowing the new corps of voters to occupy his ground, now that their services were no longer necessary. He accordingly ended all their leases by shooting *Jack Murphy*, the common life in all. Be not horrified, good reader—*Jack Murphy* was an old spavin'd horse!

stance of impartial rascality was afforded by Mr. Blake F——. He sold the votes of all his tenants to two rival candidates, and pocketed the money of both. As he did not indicate to his tenantry the particular gentleman for whose success he was desirous, one of the tenants, as spokesman for the rest, inquired of "his honour" for which of the candidates they should vote?

"Faith, boys," answered Mr. F——, "you may take your choice. *I* have knocked the highest penny I could out of your votes already, so it would be unhandsome of me to hinder you from selling yourselves now to whoever will bid the best!" The tenants thanked his honour, and proceeded as fast as they could to take his advice.—*Mais on a changé tout cela.*

CHAPTER XIV.

In public life severe,
To virtue still inexorably firm ;
But when, beneath his low illustrious roof,
Sweet peace and happy wisdom smoothed his brow,
Not friendship softer was, nor love more kind.

Thompson.

O'Connell was at last obliged, by the pressure of some members of "the Tail," as well as by the objurgations of the Repeal newspapers, to bring the question of Repeal before the House on the 22nd of April, 1834.

For some days previously, Mr. Spring Rice, who was pitched on as the special champion of the Union, was observed to frisk about the purlieus of St. Stephen's with the smirking self-complacency of anticipated triumph. He, indeed, looked forward to a two-fold victory ; he knew he should have an overwhelming majority against O'Connell's motion ; and he had availed himself of his peculiar facilities of reference to official documents, to prepare lengthy tabular statements illustrative of the "giant-stride prosperity" of Ireland under the Union. With these he ex-

pected to demolish O'Connell's allegations of Irish decay.

The 22nd arrived; the House was crowded with members—the gallery with strangers.

O'Connell's opening speech rehearsed the outrageous crimes committed by England against Ireland from the earliest date of their connexion. Having, by this historical retrospect, demonstrated the systematic enmity of England to this country, the speaker thence passed to the measure of the Union, dilated upon the means by which it was carried, exhibited the falling off in national prosperity which had been its consequence, and concluded by moving "for a select committee to inquire and report on the means by which the destruction of the Irish parliament was effected; on the effects of that measure upon Ireland, and upon the labourers in husbandry, and operatives in manufactures in England, and on the probable consequences of continuing the legislative Union between both countries."

O'Connell's able and comprehensive speech occupied five hours.

On the next day (the 23rd) Mr. Rice delivered his reply. He deprecated Mr. O'Connell's references to the English atrocities of former times, as irritating in their nature, and irrelevant to the question before the house.

He alleged the danger of two independent parliaments in one empire; and inferred the likelihood of separation under such a system, from the differences on the Regency question in 1789. I shall not recapitulate his arguments here, as the subject is carefully examined in the appendix to this work.

He alleged that the Irish Volunteers had tried to intimidate the Irish parliament subsequently to 1782. Well had it been for Ireland, if their influence had been potential! What they sought was to procure a reform of the Irish House of Commons; of which measure the principle has been since recognized, and incorporated with the British constitution by the English legislature!

He alleged that the Irish parliament had been notorious for jobs. Not more so, certainly, than the English legislature! But this only proves that it needed the reform which the volunteers sought; not that it ought to be extinguished. To urge the corruption of the unreformed Irish parliament as a reason for putting an end to it, is extremely like saying that as death puts an end to disease, the best mode of treating a sick man is to kill him outright.

He next quoted Grattan, to show that the achievements of the Irish parliament had not realized his expectations; but he omitted to

quote Grattan's declaration that the Irish parliament, with all its faults, had done more for Ireland in fourteen years than the English parliament had done for England in a century.

He denied that the rebellion had been fomented to carry the Union !

He alleged the parental care of Ireland evinced by the united parliament: stating that no less than 175 committees on Irish affairs had been appointed by the house since the Union. He forgot, however, to state that the immense majority of those committees had ended abortively; and that the committee of 1825, (for which he claimed the merit of carrying Emancipation,) was in fact the product of O'Connell's Irish agitation.

He claimed merit for England in admitting Irish corn and butter duty free ; as if it were a boon to Ireland to increase the supply of food to English consumers and to cheapen its price for them !

He inferred the "vast prosperity" of Ireland from her largely increased exports of corn and cattle ; omitting to notice that the producers of the corn and cattle were unable from penury to consume the food of their own raising ; and that much of the price received from the exports, was

again exported to England in the shape of absentee rents.*

He stated a few acts of beneficial tendency which the united parliament had passed for Ireland ; but in claiming credit for the Union on this score, he omitted to show that a reformed Irish legislature would not have passed every one of the good laws in question, and many more into the bargain.

He produced multitudinous tables to demonstrate the improved condition and increased comforts of the Irish people generally, after the Union. Cruel mockery ! In the teeth of all his

* In truth, a Table of Exports and Imports may afford no test at all of a nation's prosperity. Let me borrow the following illustration from my able friend Mr. Staunton. Fifty years ago we manufactured our own cloth ; at present we get cloth from England. Fifty years ago, one hundred pounds worth of corn sent from Tipperary to Dublin, was consumed in Dublin, and paid for with one hundred pounds' worth of cloth made in Dublin. Here was a transaction which occasioned no exports or imports. Contrast this transaction with the present condition of affairs. The hundred pounds' worth of corn goes from Tipperary—not to Dublin, but to England. It is paid for with one hundred pounds' worth of cloth made in England. An item is furnished to Spring Rice's table of exports and imports, and he cries out, "Hurrah ! I have got a triumphant proof of Irish prosperity!" But how stands the fact ? In the former transaction which exhibited no imports nor exports, the Irish corn fed the Irishman, and paid for Irish manufactures. In the latter transaction which exhibits both an import and an export, the Irish corn feeds the Englishman, and is paid for in English manufactures, whilst the Irish operative perishes for want of employment.

tables, there is the evidence of the Railway Commissioners, that 2,385,000 of the Irish people—being more than one-fourth of the whole population—are destitute paupers for thirty weeks of every year.

He stated many grants made by the imperial parliament to Ireland from 1800 to 1834. But he did *not* state that far the greater part of those grants were made prior to 1821, in virtue of an express stipulation at the time of the Union for their continuance for 21 years; nor did he state that the imperial parliament commenced the work of reduction so soon as the stipulated period had expired. And he did not state that the aggregate of the absentee rents and surplus taxes remitted from Ireland, infinitely exceeded the entire of his boasted grants.

He stated that the consolidation of the exchequers had been precipitated in 1817 by the bankruptcy of Ireland. But he did *not* tell the house that Ireland had been made bankrupt by the financial terms of the Union, which had forced her to contract for an expenditure she was totally unable to meet.

He quoted the amount of tonnage of the vessels clearing out from Irish ports, in proof of augmented commercial wealth; relying on his hearers' ignorance of the fact that tonnage was, in truth, no criterion at all!

He repeated the old claptrap of Irish agitation preventing the influx of English capital ; but he did *not* state that English capitalists had invested capital in France and in America ; to the amount, in the latter country, of £55,000,000 ; although a single hostile shot between the countries would destroy the security for re-payment.

His oration lasted for six hours and a half ; at its close he was unable to find the amendment amongst his papers, to which his long speech was the prelude. Some merriment was excited by the hon. gentleman's perplexity. The amendment was found on the following day, read by the Speaker, and seconded by Mr. Emerson Tennent, in a speech which, pursuant to his invariable and necessary habit, he had carefully written out and got by heart. The only part of it worth extracting is the following ludicrous and very characteristic specimen of flippant nonsense :

“ Ireland was, we are told, annihilated and extinguished by the Union, inasmuch as it then ceased to be a distinct kingdom. But on the same principle, Scotland must likewise have been annihilated, when she, in 1707, ceased to be a distinct kingdom on being incorporated with England ; and by a parity of reasoning, if the mere fact of incorporation, by destroying distinctness, involves extinction, England herself must have

been annihilated when she became incorporated with the other two. (loud cheers.) So that, according to the doctrine of the Repealers, the whole empire must at this moment be ideal, and exist, like the universe of Berkeley, only in the imagination of its inhabitants! (Renewed cheering.)"

What an index to the discerning sagacity of the house is afforded by the plaudits which Mr. Tennent's bit of claptrap elicited! Here now are the facts:

Ireland lost two-thirds of her representation by the Union;

England preserved *her* representation, entire and intact.

Ireland lost the power of legislating for herself;

England retained, unimpaired, the full power of self-legislation; and acquired, in addition, the power of legislating for Ireland.

Ireland lost the advantage of a resident legislature, and its consequent expenditure;

England lost nothing, and acquired the residence not only of the Irish delegates, but of the largely augmented crop of Irish absentees, whom the transfer to London of the legislative power necessarily magnetized.

And yet a parrot-statesman is cheered by the

collective wisdom, when he glibly rehearses the flashy absurdity he had duly committed to memory, that if the Union politically annihilated Ireland, it necessarily annihilated England also!

Richard Sheil made a brilliant speech in the debate. He had, for some time after 1830, been coquetting with Repeal. The Great Agitator had made many public appeals to him to join the movement; but vainly, until the general election of 1832 necessitated a decisive declaration on the subject. Sheil then announced himself a determined and unqualified Repealer; his accession was hailed with delight by O'Connell, who triumphantly exclaimed "Richard's himself again." The important recruit proved a useful and powerful ally in the parliamentary debate. Of his speech I shall quote one or two passages:

"At the time of the Union, Ireland was charged with the contribution of two-seventeenth. Was that fair? Sir John Newport and Lord Plunkett both asserted that it was most unfair; but the fact was far better than the authority of either of them; for it turned out that Ireland was unable to pay it. It was necessary to make up her deficiency by a loan. Where was that loan borrowed? In England; and the revenue of Ireland was devoted to paying the interest on that loan to British capitalists. How many millions were paid by Ireland in consequence of that injustice?

Nearly 4 or 5 millions. That was an additional injustice inflicted upon Ireland. The interest on the loan that was borrowed in England was also paid in England, and thus more of the perishing capital of Ireland was extracted from her for the advancement of English interests. Was that an unfair argument? But they would tell him, perhaps, that they had cured all this by consolidating the exchequers of the two countries; but to that he said No! for at the Union they had agreed that the surplus revenue of Ireland should be spent in Ireland. If he could show that by their injustice they had taken that surplus revenue from Ireland, then had they been guilty of a violation of the articles of the Union. Now, the surplus was not applied according to the terms of the compact; for it was sent to England and expended here."

Sheil produced great effect by his allusion to the case of Belgium *versus* Holland.

"Now turn to Belgium. Does not the example bear us out? Hear an extract from the Declaration of Belgian Independence. After stating that the union was obtained by fraud, the document goes on and states that 'an enormous debt and expenditure—the only dowry that Holland brought us at the time of our deplorable union; taxes overwhelming by their amount;

laws always voted by the Dutch *for* Holland only, and always against Belgium, represented so unequally in the States-General; the seat of all important establishments fixed in Holland; the most offensive partialities in the distribution of civil and military employments; in a word, Belgium treated as a conquered province, as a colony; everything rendered a revolution inevitable.' (Loud cheers from the Repealers.) You fear, continued Mr. Sheil, separation may be the result of Repeal. What may not be the result of maintaining the Union? Let a few years go by; Catholic and Protestant will become reconciled (their divisions cannot last for ever)—the popular power will augment—the feelings of the people will be extended to their representatives—the absentee drain will continue—the church system will be still maintained—the national mind will become one mass of heated and fiery emotion—the same disregard for the interests and feelings of Ireland will be displayed; and then (may God forefend that the event should befall!) if there be an outbreak of popular commotion here; if the prediction of the Conservatives should be fulfilled, and if your alliance with France, which is as unstable as its dynasty, should give way—*then* you may have cause to lament, but lament when it will be too late, that you did not give back her Parliament to Ireland."

Much of this prophecy is in course of realization. The Prince de Joinville would have no objection to assist in the accomplishment of the remainder.

Pity that "fiery little Sheil"—the vehement patriot of 1834—should have been subsequently be-Whig'd and be-Saxon'd by the atmosphere of Downing-street.

Sir Robert Peel followed Sheil in a speech of great ability and eloquence; but which partook of the fallacious character necessarily attaching to all that was urged in defence of the Union.

He quoted Canning's smart saying, "Repeal the Union! re-enact the Heptarchy!" but he omitted to state that both the Repeal of the Union and the re-enactment of the Heptarchy had been instanced by Canning as absurdities illustrative of the Reform in Parliament. What Canning had said, was, "Reform the Parliament! repeal the Union! restore the Heptarchy!" Canning, in a debate in the British House of Commons on the Union in 1799, termed Catholic Emancipation "a wild and impracticable measure." These random, extempore expressions of statesmen are worth little or nothing. The supposition that the man who would give Ireland a parliament, is also bound by his own principles to give parliaments to Essex and Kent, was utterly unworthy of the intellect of Canning.

Sir Robert next urged that Repeal would be a dismemberment of the empire.

He said that absenteeism was caused—not by the Union—but by “the cursed system of agitation.”

He tried to terrify the Irish Protestants by predicting that they would have real dangers to encounter, should Repeal be successful.

He manfully avowed the spirit of British domination by declaring that “he, for one, would never consent that to an Irish Parliament should be left the determination of the proportion of the amount that country should contribute in future to defray the general expenses of the state, and contribute to the diminution of the general public debt.”

A more barefaced and impudent avowal than this of the robber-principle, “We will put our hands in your pockets whether you like it or not,” it would be impossible to make. It told very well, however, with an English audience; being quite in the spirit of the Union.

He denied—in defiance of O’Connell’s proofs—that Pitt and Castlereagh had fomented the rebellion; on the ground that those statesmen could not have afforded a rebellion at a period of foreign war, and when a mutiny broke out at the Nore. They could, however, afford to pour 137,000

troops into Ireland ; and the forces thus left at their disposal well enabled them to "afford" a rebellion.

He defended the application to Ireland of the ruinous principle of *Divide et impera* ; alleging that this principle *had protected the two parties from each other* ; and that he regarded it as the mediator by which, in all domestic quarrels, the fury of both sides had been allayed.

He quizzed Mr. Feargus O'Connor about the Irish King Roderick ; quoting some ancient account of a barbarous ceremonial at the coronation of the kings of Ireland. Much laughter was excited by this sally.

He then wound up by a very eloquent allusion to the tremendous conflict which agitated Europe from 1803 to 1814 ; calling the attention of the house to the fact that among the bravest military leaders were the Irish generals Ponsonby and Packenham ; that the British army had been commanded by the Irish Wellington, "who, standing with his back to the sea on the rock of Lisbon, saw all Europe in dismay and her liberties jeopardized, but who never ceased from his glorious labours till he saw the whole continent emancipated."

What the Union had to do with the glories of Wellington, it were difficult to tell ! I presume

that, even had the Irish Parliament continued to sit in College-green, England would have been but too glad to grasp at the advantage of Irish valour and Irish military genius.

"During that period," quoth Sir Robert, [viz. from 1803 to 1814] "the reins of government were placed in the hands of a *Castlereagh* and a Pitt; and a Grattan was seen to join with a Fox in the deliberations of the legislature of the country." It is rank political blasphemy thus to class the illustrious Grattan in the same category with the despised and execrable miscreant *Castlereagh*.

The wind-up was eloquent enough—

"With the return of a separate Parliament, after the Catholic disabilities had been removed, what might not be expected from the triumphant rancour of religious hatred? It would amount to a complete disbanding of society. Who could set bounds—who could regulate the force of those antagonist powers—who could so adjust the centrifugal force, if he might so term it, which ought to keep Ireland within her proper orbit in the system of the empire, as to prevent her flying away into the chaos of lawless agitation, or a boundless sea of revolution? (Continued cheers.) To set such boundaries was beyond any power that man could possibly employ. To effect such

a state of things required the might of that omniscient and omnipotent power which, in the material world had separated the light from the darkness (loud cheers) and prescribed the eternal laws by which the magnificent harmony of the planetary system was arranged and sustained."

Sir Robert sat down in the midst of a perfect tempest of applause.

What a libel upon Catholic Ireland was contained in his concluding sentences! "Triumphant rancour of religious hatred!" So far is any feeling of sectarian animosity from pervading the Irish Catholics, that all who know them know the nationalist is a thousand-fold dearer to their hearts than the mere Catholic; they worship the Protestant Repealer; they despise and loathe the anti-national Catholic. It was stated in the debate of 1834 by Mr. Lambert of Wexford (an anti-Repealer) that the Catholic Bishop of Waterford was pelted with mud in the streets of that city because he was not a Repealer. This fact shows, that even in the estimation of the lowest and most violent of the populace, the Repealer was a character more sacred than the non-repealing prelate. "Triumphant rancour of religious hatred," truly! Why, even the mitre was unable to protect its venerable wearer from the indignation of those who deemed their nationality out-

raged by the non-adhesion of their aged pastor !

After some further skirmishing among the smaller fry, the debate was closed by Mr. O'Connell, whose speech in reply was remarkable for its vigour and vivacity. I extract from it the following passages :

“ I have insisted on the incompetence of the Irish Parliament to create a new legislature, and I am convinced I was right in that part of my argument. There was nothing to authorize the Parliament of Ireland to dispose of the Irish nation, any more than there was anything to authorize the British Parliament to dispose of the British nation to any other on the face of the globe.

“ As to the fomenting of the rebellion in order to bring about the Union—upon that point I have been perfectly triumphant. ‘ But why,’ said the Right Hon. Baronet, ‘ should Mr. Pitt and Lord Castlereagh excite a rebellion in Ireland at a time when there was a mutiny at the Nore?’ That mutiny had broken out suddenly and unexpectedly. What, therefore, had its existence to do with the fomentation of the rebellion? The English ministry did not foresee the mutiny, though they might have conjectured the outbreak of the rebellion. Could the Union have ever been carried but for the rebellion? What

answer could be given to the Report of the Secret Committee of the Irish House of Commons, from which it appeared that a person, holding the rank of Colonel of the United Irishmen, had given to the government monthly reports of their secret meetings from March, 1797? It was clear from this that the government were cognizant of the plot and had it in their power to put it down. But the right hon. gentleman said there were traitorous materials in Ireland; undoubtedly there were, otherwise there could not have been a rebellion; but those materials were not of a formidable nature. They existed to a certain extent in Leinster and Ulster, and produced two skirmishes, in one of which Lord O'Neill was killed, but the only really formidable occurrence took place in Wexford. These matters were encouraged; not repressed; and the Union was brought about by fomenting the rebellion till it exploded."

Mr. O'Connell continued in a strain of great animation to reply to the arguments of several of his opponents seriatim. He pronounced a withering philippic on Mr. Emerson Tennent; who, as he writhed beneath the overwhelming sarcasm of his assailant, bitterly lamented his own temerity in provoking the assault.

The motion for the Repeal Committee was

negatived by an enormous majority ; the numbers being 525 against 40, including the tellers.

Mr. Stanley took no part in the debate. He was probably muzzled by Sir Robert Peel, who, with characteristic policy and caution, contrived that the debate should sustain as little interruption as possible from the indecent shoutings and ferocious yells with which the Irish members had been greeted during the discussion on the Coercion Bill in the previous year. Stanley's silence was a remarkable circumstance. His feelings against the Repeal were very strong ; he had in 1833 declared "he would resist it to the death." That he did not now avail himself of the opportunity of renewing his chivalrous threat, is in all probability to be ascribed to the management of his more cautious leader who naturally doubted his discretion.

The ministerial and English journals generally were loud in their glorifications. " Spring Rice's speech was an unanswerable manual ! No Repeater for the future could dare to raise his voice against the demonstrations, clear as light, of the infinite benefits the Union had conferred upon Ireland. The question was finally set at rest"—and a great deal more of similar purport.

Meanwhile, the result of the debate upon the Irish people was precisely what any man who

knew the country and its inhabitants must have expected. They saw in the division fresh proofs of English indifference to their grievances and of English hostility to their rights. Spring Rice's tabular dexterities—his “giant-stride prosperity” on paper, seemed a heartless and insolent mockery to a people of whom every fourth individual was a destitute pauper. The zealous alacrity with which the House applauded the most hollow fallacies, afforded, to the minds of the Irish nation, fresh evidence of its total ignorance of their condition and its consequent incapacity to legislate for them. Their resolve to struggle for the Repeal—to seize whatever opportunities God might send for its achievement—was thenceforth more firmly fixed than ever.

Both Houses had addressed the King, who replied in an echo of their joint address. The address and reply contained pledges to uphold the Union; but at the same time “to remove all just causes of complaint, and to sanction all well-considered measures of improvement.”

The Irish people were not quite such fools as to place the least faith in these pledges of King, Lords, and Commons; but they acquiesced in O’Connell’s policy of testing their truth by the celebrated six years’ experiment; at the end of which, as the pledges were demonstratively proved

to have been mere delusions, the Repeal Association was established and the agitation directed once more into its natural and legitimate channel. I shall pass over the six years of Whig ascendancy and the fruitless struggles for that chimera—"Equality with England under the Union." There was, to do the Whigs justice, a fair administration of the law, and their legal appointments were excellent.

CHAPTER XV.

Resolve! Resolve! and to be MEN aspire;
Let God-like Reason from her sovereign throne
Speak the commanding word, I WILL, and it is done.

Thompson.

The time was now come when O'Connell deemed it right to abandon for ever all attempts to obtain "Justice for Ireland" from the English Parliament. He accordingly embarked in his final effort—to procure a Repeal of the Union.

On the 15th of April, 1840, he founded the Repeal Association. Its first meeting was held in the Great Room of the Corn Exchange, which is capable of accommodating about five hundred persons. The room was not one-fifth part filled—there was a discouraging display of empty benches—a commencement sufficient to dishearten a leader less sanguine than O'Connell. But he was not disheartened. He remembered the commencement of the Catholic Association—the seven men who congregated in Coyne's back parlour in Capel-street, and the magnificent result

of that small beginning—and he confidently looked forward to a yet more brilliant termination of his new enterprise.

Still the meeting had a very discouraging appearance to those who had not the sagacious forecast of the leader. It seemed as though the word "Repeal" had lost its potent magic. But the fact was far otherwise. The thinness of the attendance arose from no apathy as to the national cause. It arose from a strong fear on the part of the Repeal public that the new experiment was not made *bona fide*. Repeal had been temporarily abandoned before. Such might be again its fate. Men dreaded lest O'Connell merely meant to rattle it about the ears of the Government *in terrorem*, as a means of compelling them to make minor concessions to Ireland.

"As soon," said O'Connell, "as they begin to find out that I am thoroughly in earnest, they will come flocking in to the Association."

The chair was taken by Mr. John O'Neill of Fitzwilliam-square—a Protestant merchant of great wealth and sterling patriotism. He had been, in early youth, a member of the Volunteer army of 1782. "I was *then*," said he to me, "too young to be of much use to Ireland, and now I am too old. But—young or old—my country has always commanded and shall always

command my best services." This good old Protestant patriot has since died; full of years, and deeply honoured by his fellow countrymen.

For more than half an hour the few who had congregated at the Corn Exchange anxiously awaited the opening address of the Liberator; but he still lingered, apparently unwilling to commence, in the hope of a more numerous attendance. But no reinforcement came; there were manifestations of impatience amongst those who were assembled.

O'Connell at length rose, and with the air of one deeply impressed with the high and solemn responsibility which he incurred, spoke as follows:—

"My fellow-countrymen, I rise with the deep sense of the awful importance of the step I am about to propose to the Irish people, and a full knowledge of the difficulties by which we are surrounded, and the obstacles we have to contend with. I trust that my heart is pure, and my judgment on the present occasion unclouded; and I declare, in the presence of that God who is to judge me for an eternity of weal or of wo, that I have no object in view but the good of my native land, and that I feel in the deepest sense the responsibility I am about to incur. We are about to enter on a struggle that will terminate

only in having the most ample justice done to Ireland, by placing her upon an equality with the sister country, or in the establishment of our legislative independence. The struggle commences now; it will end only then. We commence under auspices that may afford little prospect of ultimate success to some; but those who know the character of the brave, moral, religious, and patient Irish people, cannot be of that opinion. We will, no doubt, be laughed at and derided on all sides, and sneered at by friends, who believe every thing impracticable, and opposed by those malignant enemies who will be delighted to find any opportunity of manifesting their hostility. But no matter. We were derided and laughed at before by persons of this description, when we set about the accomplishment of that great moral revolution which won religious freedom for ourselves and others."

He then referred to the small origin of the Catholic Association, its progress and triumph; exposed the delusive nature of the Union, and repeated his proofs of the anti-Irish spirit in which laws were made for Ireland by the imperial legislature. He promised perseverance;

"We have assembled to take part in proceedings that will be yet memorable in the history of our country. Yes, this 15th of April will be

yet memorable in the annals of Ireland. It shall be referred to as the day on which the flag of Repeal was unfurled ; and I shall fearlessly, legally, and constitutionally keep it unfurled until the day of success shall have arrived, or the grave shall close over me, and on my tomb shall be inscribed 'He died a Repealer !' * * * We must be up, I say, and stirring. We can do no good by quiescence ; it may do us evil, but it can do us no service. We must take counsel from the French proverb which says, 'Help yourselves, and God will help you ;' we must not forget the story of the fellow who, when the wheel of his cart stuck in the mud, prayed to Jupiter to help him. ' You lazy rascal,' said his godship, ' put your shoulder to the wheel, and get along out of that.' I tell you there is nothing else for us but to help ourselves ; and help ourselves with the aid of heaven, we shall."

Having quoted the well known denunciations of the Union pronounced in 1799 and 1800 by Bushe (the chief justice,) and Plunket, (the chancellor,) he continued,

"These are

'Thoughts that breathe, and words that burn ;'

I have them here. They shall spread through the land in the course of the next week for the perusal of the youth of Ireland : not one

of whom, I trust, will be found, whose eye will not glisten with fire—whose young heart will not burn with indignation at the spoliation resorted to by our enemies. There was a bargain forsooth!—Why, is not the Chief Justice still living? and is he not a witness for me? Is not the Lord Chancellor of Ireland, with all his As-drubals or Hannibals, living also to bear his testimony? What care I whether he has changed his opinion or no? He was honest *then*, because he had no sons to quarter on the state. Let him change now if he wish. In his day of virtue he felt and spoke those sentiments which I have read for you. Let him now change them in the day of his power and authority."

In the opening passage of O'Connell's speech, he had mentioned "justice to Ireland" as an alternative. But how perfectly visionary he deemed the prospect of obtaining that justice, is evident from the following passage :—

"If we get the justice we desire, then our Repeal Association is at an end; *but I know we will not get that justice*, and that there is nothing left for us but to pursue vigorously the course we have commenced this day. * * * Why should we for a moment deceive ourselves? *This justice will not be done to Ireland*, and we will at once set ourselves right by declaring that

there is a Repeal Association, and that unless the moral miracle be performed of having justice done to us by England, we will never cease until we have a parliament established in College-green.*

"Not one single benefit has the Union conferred upon Ireland, but on the contrary, it has brought in its train poverty, degradation, and sorrow. When once the public mind is aroused, and the evils which we have suffered pointed out to the people, the Union cannot continue. It is not the writing of a single letter, nor the delivery of a single speech, that can effect the Repeal; it

* As this passage appeared to contain an admission, even although a hypothetical one, that "justice from England" could supersede the necessity of Repeal, O'Connell guarded himself against such an objection in a subsequent speech, delivered on the 1st of May, 1840. He explained his meaning, in still retaining the semblance of an alternative, to be this, "*I have declared for the Repeal, and from this declaration nothing ever shall take me.*" It has been said that even in the formation of this society, I held out the alternative of justice. Let them do us justice; let them increase our representatives to 150 in number—let them remove the church grievances—let them increase the franchise—let them do all this, *and though they will not have convinced me that Repeal is unnecessary, they will deprive me of the forces by which I hope to succeed.....* But who supposes that they ever will be brought to do us justice? Not even a dreamer who dreamed soundly in his sleep; no one short of an idiot could be brought to believe it. Why, it is as absurd as the vulgar saying, 'to stop the tide with a pitchfork.' I hold out the alternative, to be sure, but it is to the English members of parliament; **THE ALTERNATIVE IS NOT FOR ME, IT IS FOR THEM.**"

is the concentration of public opinion, directed as a galvanic battery, that will have that effect. That opinion will then become powerful as the lightnings of heaven, destroying everything that may impede its course."

He concluded by moving the adoption of a set of rules; the seconder of the motion being Mr. John Redmond, a patriotic citizen.

So ended the first day's meeting. The Whig-liberals did their best to throw contempt and ridicule on the proceedings. The paucity of the attendance was pointed out with scorn. Those gentlemen said to their acquaintance as they met in the streets, "Dan'will never work this question—he is not in earnest—the people don't care about it"—(this was a very favourite allegation)—"he won't be able to get over the priests to help him." The word "Repealer" was pronounced with a derisive curl of the lip by the "genteel" liberals, who religiously abhorred all treason against Whiggism. More sagacious men, however, knew the question was workable. They remembered the popular enthusiasm of 1832; and they did *not* believe that enthusiasm to be a mere fever fit.

For a good while after the establishment of the Repeal Association, the English press was wholly, or nearly silent on the subject. By-and-

bye, the English journalists condescended to laugh at the Repealers. After their wit was exhausted at our expense, they began to wax abusive. The Repealers were denounced as political criminals of the worst description, and floods of coarse vituperation were poured upon them from the copious reservoirs of the *Times* newspaper. O'Connell returned the compliments of the *Times* in these verses—

“Vile press without a parallel,
Organ meet for friends of hell!
Lies thy trade; thy master-sense,
Bribed and brutal insolence.
From Puddledock to either sea,
Toryism stinks of thee.”

Not too virulent, considering that the great organ of John Bullism had termed the Irish nation “a filthy and felonious multitude,” and the Catholic clergy a tribe of “surpliced ruffians.”

CHAPTER XVI.

Such men as these
Give grace to holy mysteries,
And make the pure oblation rise,
A God-accepted sacrifice.

Anon.

The Repeal Association gradually expanded itself. Every week brought with it fresh recruits. Of these, some few were the ancient relics of a former age; old men who in early youth had stood in the ranks of the Volunteers; and who now, ere they sunk into the grave, were glad to enrol themselves once more in the service of their country. I have already named my old Protestant friend, John O'Neill. Another of our patriarchal adjuncts was Robert M'Clelland, a northern Presbyterian, who, although then past eighty, was a regular attendant at the weekly meetings at the Corn Exchange as long as his health permitted him. It would be unjust and ungrateful to omit this mention of those venerable Protestant patriots, whose aid was ever heartily rendered to every movement having for its object the enlargement of the liberties of Ireland. *Requiescant in pace!*

Repeal progressed; the Catholic clergy sent in their adhesions pretty numerously; on one occasion a bishop* and eighty-three of his clergy were enrolled together. There were three great provincial meetings for Leinster, Connaught, and Munster; at the Leinster meeting which was held near Kilkenny in October, 1840, a quarter of a million of persons were computed to be present. John O'Connell occupied the chair. It was a grave autumnal day; there was a quiet beauty in the fertile, undulating landscape, with the city in the middle distance, the proud towers of the Ormonds rising high above the mass of city buildings, and the hills of Mount Leinster and Blackstairs in the far horizon. The muster was a noble display; and was distinguished, like all the other meetings for Repeal, by that rigid observance of decorum, preservation of the peace, and perfect sobriety, which no great popular gatherings of similar extent in any other nation could exhibit.

Father Mathew's movement was essentially useful to Repeal. By withdrawing the people from the odious and irrational vice of inebriety, it raised them in the intellectual scale. Freed

* Dr. Foran, the Bishop of Waterford.

from the deleterious influences of intoxication, they were the better enabled to think and to reason. A reasoning, thinking people are not destined to slavery. Every argument in favour of Repeal comes so home to the common sense of Irishmen, that it needed only to rescue the people from habits of intemperance to convert the impulsive and unreasoning shout for liberty into a calculating, sagacious, and well-sustained struggle for national independence. The enemies of Ireland, both domestic and English, saw this; and accordingly the Temperance Movement was immediately made the object of ferocious vituperation. It is amusing to look back at some few of the exploits of the anti-teetotallers. Religious fanaticism was of course pressed into the service of drunkenness. A parson named Whitty refused to grant to Father Mathew the use of the Rock of Cashel to accommodate his postulants, alleging that "temperance was of the Devil."* Another parson named Edgar, residing in the diocese of Derry, declared in a letter to Mr. Buckingham the ex-member for Sheffield, that "teetotalism was highly insulting to the majesty of God;" at the same time expressing his fears that Mr. Buck-

* *Morning Chronicle*, 27th April, 1841.

ingham was infected with the disease "in its worst form."* The Rev. Mr. Sewell of Oxford wrote an article in the *Quarterly Review* entitled "Romanism in Ireland," asserting therein that superstition was the chief agency of the temperance movement, and murder its ultimate object.

Passing from the High Priests of Inebriety to its profaner organs, the *Protestant Magazine* for June 1841, complacently quotes from the congenial *Times* the following awful passage:

"We cannot but suspect that this temperance movement is, substantially, a sort of Trojan horse, within whose ribs there lurks an overwhelming phalanx, which, some of these nights, will sally on the sleeping sentinels of Ireland, and make it an easy prey."

The Ulster Orangemen were at all events resolved that they should not be caught napping. At Loughgall, a number of Orange farmers entered into a resolution that they would not employ any labourers who had taken the temperance pledge. In other places there were anti-temperance riots, especially at Newtownhamilton and Lurgan. The Cootehill Orangemen published a manifesto, redolent of the choicest inspirations of

* *Morning Chronicle*, 27th April, 1841.

the Orange divinity, exhorting the Protestants to oppose the entrance of Father Mathew into their district, where he purposed to administer the pledge. The document, having first adverted to the priest's threatened advent, proceeded thus :

“ Insulted Protestants ! will ye, can ye, bear it any longer ? Has the spirit of your fathers, and immortal William, died within you ? * * Arouse ! be steady and courageous ! Let not the *religion** of your fathers be trampled upon by idolators ! Let the spirit of William, that whispers to you at this moment, animate your hearts and souls, and let not the anti-christian apostle depart from Cootehill in boasted triumph.

“ Arise, I say, arise, my boys ! and raise your standard high !
The man that will not join you now, treat as an enemy ;
Fear not O’Connell—Mathew—Devil !—but let your motto be,
To put your trust in God, my boys, and keep your powder dry.

Remember Gideon’s chosen few :
The arm that guarded *them* guards *you*.”

This delirious mélange of politics, bigotry, and truculence, demonstrates the fatal success with which the Whittys and Edgars had instilled into their followers a virulent hostility to national

* *Query*, the whiskey bottle ?

amelioration. I am happy to add, that since the time of which I speak, the spirit of the north has been greatly improved. Leading men of all political shades have looked with favour upon temperance ; and as virtues are gregarious, the same result which attended the success of the Mathewite movement in the south also marked its progress in the north. As morality and sobriety advanced, nationality kept pace with them. Let the mere enthusiast, whether Orangeman or Repealer, be induced to forswear his drunken orgies ; the latter will become a more zealous, because a more enlightened and intelligent supporter of national liberty ; the former will be led to enquire whether that which is manifestly good for Ireland can be bad for himself. The result of this inquiry will make him a Repealer.

The agitation for Repeal went on, sometimes in places which conjured up interesting historical associations. A Repeal meeting was held at Carrick-on-suir, which was followed by a public dinner in the evening. The dinner took place in an apartment at the top of the principal inn ; I was told that many persons had wished to obtain a room in the castle of Carrick-on-suir for the festivity ; but a fear lest Lord Ormond, the proprietor of the castle, might visit with his vengeance the gentleman who rented the old

building as tenant-at-will, induced the managers of the dinner to select the less commodious apartment in the hotel.

I chanced on that day to be at Carrick, and I walked to see the old castle. It is beautifully situated in a secluded lawn overhanging the Suir, at the distance of a few hundred yards from the eastern end of the town. I could not ascertain the date of the older, or castellated portion of the edifice; the more modern part was erected by Thomas Butler, Earl of Ormond, in 1565, which date is displayed on the wall of the hall ; on which, likewise, there is a rude fresco representing Queen Elizabeth, with the initials " E. R." On the opposite wall there is another fresco representing the founder, who is said by the tradition of the castle to have found favour as a lover with that princess.

This curious old mansion of the Butlers is still habitable. Its front exhibits a long row of gables, in the fashion of Elizabethan manor-houses, with a large oriel window in the centre over the porch. Its large deserted chambers are just such as spectral personages might readily honour with their visits ; I accordingly asked if the house was haunted? and was told by the person who showed it, that in the days of the Ormonds a ghost had been constantly there—a utilitarian

ghost, as it would seem—for he used to officiate as volunteer shoe-black, and to discharge other duties of domestic labour.

The largest apartments are on the upper story. There is a noble drawing-room about sixty feet long, which contains two decorated chimneys. Old "Tom Butler," as the guide familiarly called him, has left a record of his devotion to Elizabeth, in the frequent repetition of her majesty's initials and arms in the quaint stucco ornaments of the ceiling. There is another spacious room on the same floor, with an oriel overlooking the river.

I was inclined to regret that Mr. O'Connell was not entertained in this old stronghold of the Butlers. The old walls speak eloquently to the imagination—there would have been a romantic interest in beholding the great advocate of Irish independence working out his mighty task in the deserted residence of one of the most powerful of the Norman-Irish families—enforcing the right of Ireland to self-government in the ancient halls of Elizabeth's favourite, who performed *his* share of the duty of riveting the English chain upon his country;*—in those halls which, at a later period,

* Thomas Butler, the founder of the Elizabethan part of Carrick-on-Suir Castle, was the tenth Earl of Ormond, and died there in his

were the habitation of James, Duke of Ormond; who exercised such a potent influence—partly for good, but more for evil, on the destinies of Ireland.

I lingered until twilight in the castle. The echo of the closing doors sounded weirdly and solemn through the dusky chambers; it came upon the ear like the voice of ages past. The guide bore in his hand the ponderous old keys, which, to judge from their great size and rude workmanship, might have been coeval with the edifice itself. When I reached the lawn, I turned to look once more on the venerable pile, reposing in its solitude and silence, and then retraced my steps to the town.

88th year, in 1614. He was great uncle to James, the celebrated Duke of Ormond, who often mentioned his recollection of his aged relative, as “a blind old man, having a long beard and wearing his George about his neck whether he sat up in his chair or lay down in his bed.” In 1632 James made a journey from London to Carrick, which, even according to modern ideas, seems a rapid one. On a Saturday morning in September he left London, and rode post to Acton, within eight miles of Bristol. At eight next morning he sailed from Bristol to Waterford in a vessel called “The Ninth Whelp,” and at nine o’clock, A. M. on Monday they ran up to Waterford, whence his lordship immediately took horse for Carrick, which is distant from Waterford only sixteen miles.

Henry Hyde, second Earl of Clarendon, in a letter to Lord Rochester, dated in 1686, says of this old seat, “Carrick, an ancient seat belonging to the Duke of Ormond, is, I think, one of the prettiest places I ever saw in my life.”—*Clarendon’s Letters, London, 1828.*

At the Repeal dinner, O'Connell said, "I am often asked how I can expect to obtain the Repeal from the imperial parliament, when I have not been able to obtain minor benefits? I answer this question by reminding the querists that upon the minor advantages I sought, I have not been supported by the whole Irish people; whereas the Repeal agitation accumulates around me their entire strength. Minor objects were not of sufficient importance to enlist their full energies. The eagle does not catch flies. The eagle spirit of Ireland soars above these individual advantages, and perches on the lofty pedestal of national independence." He proceeded to predict the certain attainment of Repeal, so soon as universal Ireland should be actively aroused in its behalf; and he then, in a strain of fervid eloquence, described the long perspective of Irish prosperity which he expected to result from that measure.

Carrick had its own sad experience of decay since the Union, there having been prior to that measure a thriving woollen-trade in the town and its immediate vicinity, giving bread to about 5000 persons; whereas now there is but partial employment for about 100 persons there.

Go where they would, the Repeal agitators had the dismal and terrible advantage of being

able to point to the surrounding crowds, instances of similar decay with which their own experience was familiar ; practical fulfilments of John Foster's memorable words, "Where the parliament is, there will the manufacturer be also." In Limerick there had been before the Union over a thousand woollen-weavers ; the number had shrunk into less than seventy ! In Bandon—Protestant Bandon—there had been before the Union a flourishing manufacture of camlets, cords, and stuffs. That trade had all but vanished ; the only branch of woollen manufacture now remaining, being that of frieze for the peasantry.* And similar decay had widely overspread the land on all sides.

The viceroy—Lord Ebrington—now made an effort to arrest the progress of Repeal, by announcing that no member of the Repeal Association should be appointed to any office in the gift of the government. This declaration necessarily scared all the place-hunters from joining the movement, and thus preserved it from the adhesion of a good deal of rascality. Lord Ebrington's threat was undignified, but not unnatural. He

* For copious details on this subject, see the admirable report on "The disastrous effects of the Union on the Woollen, Silk, and Cotton Manufacture," drawn up by Mr. Secretary Ray.

probably thought that as the Union was originally carried through bribery, Repeal could best be averted by bribing men through their hopes of office to refrain from junction with the agitators.

CHAPTER XVII.

Arouse thee, youth! it is no idle call—
Our rights are leaguer'd—haste to man the wall :
Haste where the old green banner waves on high,
Signal of honoured death, or victory.

Hitherto the agitation, although occupying the minds of the people, and engaging much of their support, had not been efficiently organized. To supply this defect, and at the same time to circulate the principles of nationality in the various rural districts, it was now deemed advisable to send missionaries through the land. The persons selected by the committee of the Association to discharge this arduous duty, were Mr. John O'Connell, third son of the Liberator; Mr. Ray, the Secretary of the Repeal Association; and myself.

On the 12th of September, 1842, we left Dublin for our several routes. Mr. Ray proceeded to Limerick, Munster having been assigned as the district of his labours. Leinster was com-

mitted to me. Mr. John O'Connell was the Repeal missionary for Connaught ; and as our route for the first and second day lay in the same direction, we travelled together in the canal boat to Mullingar. At that town we waited on the Catholic Bishop of the diocese who promised his cordial co-operation to the cause in which we were engaged.

Next day we proceeded to Ballymahon, where the Bishop of Ardagh had invited a large party of the clergy to meet us. There was much grave and earnest discussion on the subject of the movement. The prelate pledged himself that all the influence he possessed should be placed at the disposal of the Repeal Association. The Bishop of Meath had given a similar pledge ; and nobly have both promises been since redeemed by those venerated men and by their clergy !

Without the active co-operation of the Irish priesthood, the Repeal cause could never have acquired the commanding position it now occupies. It is not uninteresting to trace the gradations of its progress in the rural districts. Three men, animated with the most ardent desire to promote national freedom, travelled from town to town, from parish to parish. They solicited and obtained the hearty and powerful support of the priests. They assembled their countrymen in the

market-place, in the chapel, on the bleak hill-side ; they told in plain and energetic language the tale of England's crime and Ireland's degradation ; they enumerated the grinding wrongs, the oppressions and the robberies inflicted on the ill-starred land, which in losing the power of self-government had lost the power of self-defence ; they asked their countrymen whether this national dishonour should continue ? whether the Irish people should not stretch forth their hands to seize and to fashion into strength the rich elements of power and prosperity which everywhere lay scattered around ? They made it a personal question to each individual ; they charged it home upon the conscience of each, whether *he* would be a guilty partaker, by his criminal apathy, in the foul wrongs inflicted by England on his native soil ? They asked

“ Could the injured realm no arms supply,
But the abject tear and the slavish sigh ? ”

They stirred up into energetic life the slumbering spirit of old nationhood ; they awoke the political sleeper from his trance ; “ Repeal ” began to be a gathering shout in many a district that had long dozed on in torpid inactivity ; the connexions of the central institute in Dublin were extended through the land ; the pulsations of the heart began to be felt at the extremities, and the

question soon exhibited in the different rural districts a vitality and vigour which astonished the whole tribe of anti-Irish gentlemen with wooden heads and stony hearts ; men whose diseased and stunted intellects were perfectly incapable of regarding any great public question except through the medium of the narrowest, the paltriest prejudice.

It was in the rural dwellings of the clergy that the question was now efficiently worked. In the priest's humble home a power was being organized which was destined to make tyranny reel in high places. And how simple the process ! how easy the details ! Look at that anxious, thoughtful group, gathered round the pastor's table. The shutters are closed ; the candles lighted ; the faggot blazes brightly on the hearth ; "the autumn breeze's bugle sound" is heard without—it has swept from the hills, and its wild voice awakens in the heart a mystic thrill for freedom. The priest tells his guest the effective strength of the district, availing himself, in the detail, of the local information possessed by the parishioners, or the neighbouring clergy, who have assembled at his house. It is then ascertained who will work ; who will undertake the duty of Repeal Warden ; who will collect the Repeal rent ; and who will assume the charge of

particular ploughlands, if in the country, or wards; if in a town. The obstacles are also canvassed; the hostility of Lord So-and-so, or of Captain —— his agent, who swears he will eject every tenant who gives sixpence to any of O'Connell's devices! Or perhaps there is the anti-Irish Catholic landlord—a greater scourge than the Orange proprietor—who since shuffling off his penal coil in 1829, has affected the courtier and fine gentleman, and conceives that he establishes his claim to aristocratic distinction by mimicking the tyranny of those by whom his creed is denounced as satanic; the supple slave of Tory squires; the petty tyrant of his village, who redeems the *vulgarity* of going to mass by the severity with which he grinds the unfortunate tenantry who go there along with him. To elude the spiteful vigilance of persons of this most execrable class, is a problem which engages the attention of our coterie; the problem is speedily solved. What needs squire A. or Lord B. know about the tenants' contributions? A discreet warden who can be silent when occasion requires, is appointed to receive their subscriptions—so *that* matter is settled. Then speculations arise respecting the possible adhesion of men whose countenance would be advantageous; they are alleged to have uttered very radical sentiments on certain occa-

sions; could they now be got to realize their patriotic declarations?

Having arranged all these practical matters and set the agitation in a working train, the missionary next makes inquiry respecting the past and present state of trade, and the social condition of the people in the district. The information thus elicited is painful; it develops the national decay and the popular destitution. Nearly all over Leinster, the linen trade—once the great staple—is now only a memory. The inquirer finds that in the immediate vicinity of Clara in the King's County, capital amounting to at least £150,000, had been invested in that trade, which is now extinct in that locality. The old men who have joined the priest's party tell the visitor that prior to the Union they remember from forty to fifty head of cattle killed at Christmas by the villagers and farmers who then could afford to eat beef; whereas now, instead of forty or fifty, not half a dozen Christmas cows are consumed by the impoverished people. At Mullingar he hears there had been a flourishing linen trade before the Union—that trade is now gone. At Athlone that trade gave bread to from 4000 to 5000 persons prior to the Union. There is now no linen-trade at Athlone—but there is a large poorhouse there! The country around

Banagher, Ferbane, Ballicumber, and Cloghan, had once been covered over with the linen manufacture. It has there shared the same fate as at Athlone and Mullingar; it is extinguished.

The numerous deserted mansions, formerly the seats of splendid hospitality, but now decaying from the neglect of their absentee owners, also form a painful item in the missionary's information.

On one point a great unanimity prevails; namely, that all these evils, and nearly all other grievances affecting the country, have their source either remotely or immediately in the denial to Ireland of the power of making her own laws; and in the anti-national, anti-Irish spirit which the Union had infused into the aristocracy.

Such are the topics that occupy the group in the priest's parlour.

At the Repeal meeting next day, the thousands who assemble round the missionary drink in his words with an eagerness that evinces the depth and fervour with which they are ready to fling themselves into the constitutional strife; they exhibit intellectual quickness in their just and accurate perception of the points brought before them by the speakers. Their appreciation of the arguments addressed to them is clear and instantaneous. They evince this mental power by the judicious mode in which they cheer or otherwise

testify the impression made upon their minds. A striking and honourable feature in the national character is also developed at these gatherings ; namely the profound reverence the Irish people entertain for religion. If the name of the Deity be pronounced, every hat is raised ; if the Divine blessing be invoked on Ireland—if the speaker expresses his reliance on the protection of Providence for the ultimate success of the movement and the consequent greatness and happiness of the land, there follows a deep murmur of reverential acquiescence from the multitude ; there is an earnestness of voice, gesture, and countenance, which demonstrates how intense is the reliance of the Irish people on the overruling care of their God.

There cannot be a more interesting occupation than that of the Repeal missionary. He penetrates into retired rural districts ; hemingles with the people ; he learns from personal inquiry and actual observation to know their condition rather better than if he had trusted for his knowledge to the monstrous fallacies of Spring Rice and Montgomery Martin.* He finds that

* Mr. Staunton, the editor of the Dublin *Register*, has produced a trenchant castigation of this impudent quack, in a pamphlet published at the expense of the Repeal Association.

condition grievously deteriorated since the time when Arthur Young wrote his excellent and instructive Tour in Ireland. In enlarging his acquaintance with his countrymen he augments his indignant horror at their wrongs, and his zealous devotion to their service.

The Catholic chapels and the abodes of the priests often afford interesting mementos of the penal days. In the more remote parishes, the house of the pastor is sometimes a thatched cabin adjoining the chapel which is also thatched ; both nestling in the nook of a hill, or in some retired situation which seems to evidence that concealment from observation was an object with the founder. In the chapel is the old, rough, unpainted wood-work ; there are the deal benches, rails, and altar, clumsy in their construction, and brown from age ; the rude white-washed walls, the decaying windows, the simple roof which has sheltered the worshippers for four generations from the inclemency of the weather. On the altar is the tiny sacring bell which has tinkled, perhaps for a century, to announce the "Canon," the "Elevation," and the "Agnus Dei." Relics are these of the dark time of Catholic depression ; relics which, notwithstanding their humble appearance in modern estimation, were doubtless in their day the source of modest pride and tri-

umph to the priests and the flocks who had been accustomed to celebrate their worship in the glen or on the plain, beneath the chill blasts of winter or the scorching sun of summer. To *them*, a roof, however rude, under which to adore their Creator, was indeed a luxurious novelty! Then the priest's cabin! a tenement containing four miserable closets, two bed-rooms, a parlour, and a kitchen.

In wet weather the Repeal missionaries sometimes got the use of the chapels for their meetings. The rude old walls which had witnessed the timid orisons of a persecuted flock in penal days, now echoed to the proud and joyous voice of reviving nationality.

These remnants of a former period contrast strongly with the spacious and substantial churches raised within the last few years by the voluntary subscriptions of the people. The Catholic clergy in the wealthier parishes now reside in excellent and comfortable houses. The traveller is forcibly impressed with the contrast between the past and the present. He sees in its obvious moral a powerful evidence of the fidelity with which the Irish people adhered under persecution to the faith which they deemed the best, and of the pious zeal with which, when disenthralled from penal shackles, they have reared temples to

the worship of the most High God. He sees in it also an evidence of the perfect efficacy of the voluntary system in support of religious establishments.

The missionaries forwarded to the Association weekly reports of their progress. Mr. Ray especially turned his attention to the condition of the peasantry, and from one of his reports I extract the following passages descriptive of the wretchedness endured by the poorer inhabitants of Charleville, County Cork :

"At the meeting on Sunday," says Mr. Ray, "the Rev. Mr. Meagher mentioned a most revolting case of destitution connected with this subject, occasioned by the head of a family being thrown out of employment. He was a check-weaver, of sober, industrious habits, but reduced to such a state, that after having parted with every article to support nature, his wife actually perished for want! her helpless babes were lying beside their dead mother, unconscious of their loss—the unfortunate man himself in agonized bewilderment! In this condition the Rev. Mr. Meagher found them on Christmas-day! Innumerable appalling cases here and elsewhere might be added of the effects of that fatal act which robbed Ireland of her industrial occupations, and her people of their spirit and nationality.

"Immediately adjoining Mr. Dudley's, in the town, there is a row of wretched cabins; these were formerly the happy residences of busy inmates. They are erected on a plot of ground, held originally by lease for lives under the Earl of Cork, (an absentee nobleman.) I understand the lessee, some years since, consigned the occupying tenants to his lordship, the rents being apportioned on their respective holdings. One of the cabins is held by a widow named Dalton; that and one adjoining were erected by her late husband—the rent £2 a year. The roof was blown off the latter cabin at the great storm last January, and so it remains. The other is so dilapidated that the rain pours all through. Next to this, is one held by widow Meehan, at 7s. 10d. per year, almost roofless and utterly untenantable; her son-in-law died, leaving his wife and an infant, now two years old, an incumbrance upon the poor widow; they are supported chiefly by charity; she told me that she had to pawn her bed-clothes last year to pay the rent and was never since able to release them, and that she wished she had them now to pawn again, for the present year's rent is due. A man named Clifden held another of these cabins and a small plot at £1 15s. a year. He is a labourer at 6d. a day, when he can get work. The surviving life in

the original lease was supposed to have died a couple of years since, and possession was taken of the entire range under ejectment process. The day this occurred, Clifden had the roof partly stripped and was in the act of repairing it with new thatch. They had, of course, to quit, and this roof was also blown off by the wind. *It was presently discovered that the life in the lease was in being,* (as the respected lady is still,) and the tenants were allowed to continue; but this man with a wife and a number of young children had to hire a miserable cabin at the outskirts of the town, and he is liable to the two rents. The very next hut is still worse: the roof of this was also blown down by the 'great storm'; it is held by John Molony, labourer, at 15s. a year; it is exactly twelve feet square; the clay walls about six feet high; the poor man made a sort of covering from the old sticks and thatch of the fallen roof, but from its flatness, totally incapable of resisting the wet. I found his wife and five of his children huddled together in a corner of this hut, scarcely covered with a few loathsome rags; the youngest was in her arms, the two next had only dirty coarse tattered bibs, the others little better; the two elder boys were out helping their father to dig, &c. This was on Tuesday last—the two preceding nights

had been most wet and inclement, and this unhappy family could get no rest, as there was not a dry spot they could lie on. I observed the remains of an old deal bedstead in a corner, with as much broken straw and rags as would make a bed for a dog ; the floor under it, and indeed through the entire, in a complete bog with wet. I asked, was *that* where they slept ?—The woman said— ‘Aye, is it !’ ‘Have the entire family no other sleeping place ?’ said I.—‘None other.’ I could ask no further questions. They were standing round two or three sods of half burned turf, trying to dry their rags ; it was so, in fact, with the rest. I did not see in all those places together as much as would equal one good fire. This poor woman told me that up to two months ago the elder children used to attend the school, but were now too naked to go there. * * *

“I have given but a sample of what is prevalent everywhere about the towns and in the rural districts. ‘They starve themselves,’ said an intelligent man to me, ‘to feed the pigs for the rents.’ It is impossible to witness these things without deep sensation.”

What a picture of the desolating consequences of absenteeism and of the destruction of Irish manufactures ! When some instances of Irish poverty and suffering were once mentioned in the

House of Lords, the Duke of Wellington observed that it would not mend the matter to set up a parliament in Ireland; because there was also deep misery in England, which country *did* actually enjoy the residence of the legislature. "There is a parliament in England—there is also misery there; therefore seek not for a Repeal of the Union."

To tell us Irish that imperial legislation has not protected England from dire distress, is, at least, a very whimsical method of inducing us to confide in imperial legislation for Ireland! If your English parliament has not kept the wolf from your own doors, pray how are we to expect it will keep him from ours? Much of the misery existing in England is directly traceable to the Irish poverty caused by the Union. The poorer Irish, having no manufactures to employ their surplus hands at home, emigrate in shoals to England, where they lower the wages of labour in the market, and drag down the English operatives to the level of their own wretchedness. Had the Duke remembered this, he would perhaps have doubted the soundness of his anti-repeal inference from the distress existing in certain English districts.

Every political quack will supply his own nostrum. The social diseases of Ireland are now

admitted upon all hands. You scarcely find any man of any party who does not laugh to scorn Spring Rice's "giant-stride prosperity." It was available for a parliamentary claptrap, and for a parliamentary pretext for opposing Repeal; but it was the very hyperbole of audacious falsehood; it was too monstrous to endure in the real convictions of a single individual. The social diseases, I repeat, are admitted on all hands. The condition of Ireland is proverbially anomalous. There are the startling incongruities of an anti-Irish aristocracy enlisted against the just rights of the masses of the people; of a church-establishment paid by the many for the benefit of the few; of a rich proprietary hating the land whence their wealth, their rank, their social respectability are exclusively derived; of a soil unexcelled in its fertility, yet inhabited by a people whose poverty is declared by tourists to exceed all they ever had witnessed of human destitution elsewhere. That all this leaven should not powerfully work for evil, no rational man could expect. Yet see what paltry nostrums are prescribed. One set discovered a cure for all evils in the introduction of a poor law. The poor law came; it furnished some good places and good jobs—it also furnished an infinitude of popular discontent: the people were obliged to pay a new tax, whilst

there was no perceptible diminution in the number of wandering mendicants. Another set of politicians prescribe "tranquillity," just as if inaction could ever cure a grievance! Other enthusiasts prescribe an inundation of bibles and increased "missionary vigour" on the part of the established clergy. Others again recommend the Whig emollients of enlarged franchises, and a further reduction of the irritating and oppressive nuisance called the Church Establishment.

It is not however the absentee legislator, nor the cold, utilitarian political economist, nor the clever political speculator who indites flippant paragraphs at his desk, nor the Cockney tourist who posts through Ireland to construct a marketable book from the salient traits which appear on the surface of society—it is not one of these who can prescribe, or even comprehend, an adequate remedy. They have not the requisite knowledge of the people; and if they had, they have not the hearty sympathies which are indispensable to render that knowledge available. Cold, self-sufficient dogmatizers too many of them are, viewing all they see (and how little is that all!) through the medium of certain preconceived political theories, nine-tenths of which are perfectly inapplicable to the condition of the country.

He whose intercourse with the people has been

extensive and prolonged ; who has mingled with his fellow-countrymen on terms of the most unreserved mutual confidence ; who has seen their struggles against the tyranny that would grind them into powder ; who has witnessed the anxious heavings of a nation's breast ; who thoroughly knows the intense sincerity and unalterable determination with which his compatriots are actuated ; who witnesses the persevering efforts of the anti-Irish class to prevent the disenthralment of the people from their bondage ;—he who has seen the pernicious and deadly antagonism of the two great sections of the Irish nation, is compelled to trace the origin of Irish evils to English influence operating thro' an alien legislature, and exclusive institutions ; and to recognize in the Repeal of the Union the only possible cure for the social disease ; the only certain guarantee against relapse.

It is perfectly manifest that exclusive institutions could not, in the present day, survive the restoration of the Irish Legislature. The class who are now infected with a vicious hatred of their native country, would then become nationalized in spite of themselves. They could not help it. The preponderating pressure of the national sentiment, having a legislature for its organ, would be too much for their puny resistance.

Their prejudices would be swept away in the national torrent. They would, despite their contortions and grimaces, be made auxiliary to the general prosperity and glory. They would be at last merged in the great mass of Irishmen.

Nothing short of the Repeal can fulfil the requirements of Ireland. Imagine every minor boon conceded that the most liberal Whig-Radical could proffer; imagine tithes abolished, the franchises enlarged, the representation extended, the bench purified, the magistracy weeded—yet, so long as Ireland possessed no Parliament, we should still have England's robber-hand in our pockets; we should still be at England's mercy or caprice respecting the control of our national purse; we should still remain degraded by the absence of that privilege without which man is a despised slave—the uncontrolled management of our own country for ourselves. Thus, if England were to give us everything else, yet so long as she withheld from us our Parliament, we should be deprived of that which were far more valuable than all the rest put together.

John O'Connell achieved much good in Connaught. He received powerful assistance from that distinguished ornament of the Irish church, the Archbishop of Tuam. He held meetings at Carrick-on-Shannon; Carra Castle (co. Mayo);

the town of Roscommon ; Castlerea (co. Roscommon) ; Castlebar ; Tuam ; and Ballymoe (co. Galway.) He also had the honour of participating in three or four clerical conferences ; and during his tour contributed most efficiently to place the Repeal movement on a firm and permanent footing in the west.

The result of the missions was increased perseverance and activity on an organized plan. Their immediate effect on the Repeal rent was remarkable. The week before the missionaries started, the rent was £45 14s. 8d. The week after their return it reached £235.

CHAPTER XVIII.

True, my friend, as if an angel said it;
Would an angel's pealing voice were thine,
Till thy words were rooted and imbedded
Deep in every Irish heart as mine,
Battling for our isle's regeneration.
Still we know the future holds no chance,
Hope, or prospect for this Irish nation,
Save in trampling down intolerance—
Trampling down the bigot's broils that pandered
Through the past to England's foulest deeds,
Writing broadly on our souls and standard
This unchanging motto—**DEEDS NOT CREEDS.**

Poetry of the Nation.

A notable event in the year 1842 was the establishment of the *Nation* newspaper.

The proprietor and editor, Mr. Charles Gavan Duffy, had previously exhibited the self-reliance of conscious talent in setting up the Belfast *Vindicator*, despite the discouraging predictions of numerous friends well acquainted with the North, who assured him that the failure of a Repeal journal in Saxonized Ulster was a matter of certainty. Duffy, nothing daunted, persevered in his experiment, and speedily reached a circulation of thirteen hundred; establishing a firm

footing in the heart of the enemy's quarters. The ability with which the *Vindicator* was conducted, soon acquired for its editor a high reputation as a journalist. Mr. Duffy felt, before long, that his talents required a wider scope for their exercise than could be afforded by the conduct of a provincial journal, however respectable. He resolved upon starting the *Nation*.

In this new undertaking he encountered discouragement similar to that which had waited on his northern experiment. Intelligent, observant men, who wished him well, treated his hopes of success as quite chimerical ; asserting with much colour of probability that the entire ground was preoccupied by the two respectable weekly metropolitan journals which were already the exponents and propagandists of Repeal doctrines.

The *Weekly Freeman's Journal* had been edited in succession by several warm and able advocates of Irish independence ; the *Weekly Register*, conducted by Michael Staunton, had acquired great value from the extensive and accurate financial and statistical knowledge profusely scattered through its leading articles. Mr. Staunton has been truly called the father of a distinct school—and a most useful one—of

Irish politics. He has devoted his abilities to the elucidation of the knotty question of international finance; a question the most easily obscured by the ingenuity of official chicane.

The *Nation* appeared contemporaneously with the Repeal missions. Its projectors little heeded the vaticinations of timid prophets; in the words of their prospectus, "they were prepared, if they did not find a way open, to try if they could not make one."

And a way they *did* make, and that right speedily. They were, in truth, encouraged to their task by the conviction that since the success of O'Connell's great struggle for civil and religious liberty, a *new mind* had grown up in Ireland; a mind filled with new thoughts, new aspirations — panting to achieve new victories.

The style of the *Nation* was eminently fervid and earnest; it told home upon the hearts of the people. It spoke forth the singleness and energy of purpose whereby its editor was characterised. At the present period, some of its most exciting articles are the production of Mr. Thomas MacNevin, a young barrister of highly popular abilities, who has deservedly been termed "the most eloquent member of the Young Ireland party."

One very attractive feature in the *Nation* was the poetry that enriched its columns. There were many poetical contributors, of whom the principal were Mr. Duffy, and Mr. Thomas Osborne Davis, a Protestant barrister. Their minds were stored with the annals of their country—the feuds, the wrongs, the struggles of elder ages—the gallant exhibitions of an often-foiled but never vanquished spirit of national liberty. The thoughts inspired by those annals—now flowing in a dark and vengeful current—now rushing along in impetuous tumult—now softening into deep and solemn pathos—now concentrated in stern defiance—now soaring aloft upon the buoyant wings of lightsome hope—were thrown into verses glowing with a passionate fervour that awakened into life every slumbering pulse of Irish patriotism.

Here is Young Ireland's tribute to her Liberator :—

I.

I saw him at the hour of pray'r, when morning's earliest dawn
Was breaking o'er the mountain tops—o'er grassy dell and lawn;
When the parting shades of night had fled—when moon and stars
 were gone,
Before a high and gorgeous shrine the chieftain kneel'd alone.
His hands were clasp'd upon his breast, his eye was raised above—
I heard those full and solemn tones in words of faith and love :
He pray'd that those who wrong'd him might for ever be forgiv'n ;
Oh ! who would say such prayers as *these* are not received in
heav'n ?

260 YOUNG IRELAND'S TRIBUTE TO O'CONNELL.

II.

I saw him next amid the best and noblest of our isle—
There was the same majestic form, the same heart-kindling smile !
But grief was on that princely brow—for others still he mourn'd,
He gazed upon poor fetter'd slaves, and his heart within him
burn'd :
And he vowed before the captive's God to break the captive's
chain—
To bind the broken heart, and set the bondsman free again :
And fit was he our chief to be in triumph or in need,
Who never wrong'd his deadliest foe in thought, or word, or deed !

III.

I saw him when the light of eve had faded from the West—
Beside the hearth that old man sat, by infant forms caress'd ;
One hand was gently laid upon his grandchild's clust'ring hair,
The other, raised to heav'n, invoked a blessing and a pray'r !
And woman's lips were heard to breathe a high and glorious
strain—
Those songs of old that haunt us still, and ever will remain
Within the heart like treasured gems, that bring from mem'ry's cell
Thoughts of our youthful days, and friends that we have loved so
well !

IV.

I saw that eagle glance again—the brow was marked with care,
Though rich and regal are the robes the Nation's chief doth wear ;*
And many an eye now quailed with shame, and many a cheek now
glow'd,
As he paid them back with words of love for ev'ry curse bestowed.
I thought of his unceasing care, his never-ending zeal ;
I heard the watchword burst from all—the gath'ring cry—*Repeal* ;
And as his eyes were raised to heav'n—from whence his mission
came—
He stood amid the thousands there a monarch save in name !

* Written when O'Connell was Lord Mayor.

I select the following poems, not so much because they are specimens of poetical excellence, as from the plain exposition they afford of the policy, principles, and objects of their authors. The first is entitled—

A LAY SERMON.

BY CHARLES GAVAN DUFFY.

L.

BROTHER, do you love your brother?
 Brother, are you all you seem?
 Do you live for more than living?
 Has your Life a law, and scheme?
 Are you prompt to bear its duties,
 As a brave man may beseem?

II.

Brother, shun the mist exhaling
 From the fen of pride and doubt;
 Neither seek the house of bondage
 Walling straitened souls about;
 Bats! who, from their narrow spy-hole,
 Cannot see a world without.

III.

Anchor in no stagnant shallow—
 Trust the wide and wond'rous sea,
 Where the tides are fresh for ever,
 And the mighty currents free;
 There, perchance, oh! young Columbus,
 Your New World of truth may be.

IV.

Favor will not make deserving—
 (Can the sunshine brighten clay?)
 Slowly must it grow to blossom,
 Fed by labour and delay,
 And the fairest bud to promise
 Bears the taint of quick decay.

V.

You must strive for better guerdons,
 Strive to be the thing you'd seem ;
 Be the thing that God hath made you,
 Channel for no borrowed stream ;
He hath lent you mind and conscience ;
 See you travel in their beam !

VI.

See you scale life's misty highlands
 By this light of living truth !
 And with bosoms braced for labour,
 Breast them in your manly youth ;
 So when age and care have found you,
 Shall your downward path be smooth.

VII.

Fear not, on that rugged highway,
 Life may want its lawful zest ;
 Sunny glens are in the mountain,
 Where the weary feet may rest,
 Cooled in streams that gush for ever
 From a loving mother's breast.

VIII.

" Simple heart and simple pleasures,"
 So they write life's golden rule ;
 Honor won by supple baseness,
 State that crowns a cankered fool,
 Gleam as gleam the gold and purple
 On a hot and rancid pool.

IX.

Wear no show of wit or science,
 But the gems you've won and weighed ;
 Thefts, like ivy on a ruin,
 Make the rifts they seem to shade :
 Are you not a thief and beggar
 In the rarest spoils arrayed ?

x.

Shadows deck a sunny landscape,
 Making brighter all the bright :
 So, my brother ! care and danger
 On a loving nature light,
 Bringing all its latent beauties
 Out upon the common sight.

xi.

Love the things that God created,
 Make your brother's need your care ;
 Scorn and hate repel God's blessings,
 But where love is, *they* are there ;
 As the moonbeams light the waters,
 Leaving rock and sand-bank bare.

xii.

Thus, my brother, grow and flourish,
 Fearing none, and loving all ;
 For the true man needs no patron,
 He shall climb, and never crawl ;
 Two things fashion their own channel—
 The strong man and the waterfall.

The next is a song of triumph at the union
 of all Irishmen :

BY THOMAS DAVIS.

I.

IRELAND ! rejoice, and England ! deplore—
 Faction and feud are passing away ;
 'Twas a low voice, but 'tis a loud roar,
 “ Orange and Green will carry the day.”
 Orange ! Orange !
 Green and Orange !
 Pitted together in many a fray—
 Lions in fight !
 And link'd in their might,
 Orange and Green will carry the day.

Orange ! Orange !
Green and Orange !
Wave them together o'er mountain and bay.
Orange and Green !
Our King and our Queen !
“ Orange and Green will carry the day !”

II.

Rusty the swords our fathers unsheathe'd—
William and James are turn'd to clay—
Long did we till the wrath they bequeath'd;
Red was the crop, and bitter the pay !
Freedom fled us !
Knaves misled us !
Under the feet of the foemen we lay—
Riches and strength
We'll win them at length,
For Orange and Green will carry the day !
Landlords fool'd us ;
England ruled us,
Hounding our passions to make us their prey ;
But, in their spite,
The Irish “ Unite,”
And Orange and Green will carry the day !

III.

Fruitful our soil where honest men starve ;
Empty the mart, and shipless the bay ;
Out of our want the Oligarchs carve ;
Foreigners fatten on our decay !
Disunited,
Therefore blighted,
Ruined and rent by the Englishman's sway ;
Party and creed
For once have agreed—
Orange and Green will carry the day !
Boyne's old water,
Red with slaughter !
Now is as pure as an infant at play ;
So, in our souls,
Its history rolls,
And Orange and Green will carry the day !

IV.

English deceit can rule us no more,
Bigots and knaves are scattered like spray—
Deep was the oath the Orangeman swore,
“Orange and Green must carry the day!”
Orange! Orange!
Bless the Orange!
Tories and Whigs grew pale with dismay,
When, from the North,
Burst the cry forth,
“Orange and Green will carry the day;”
No surrender!
No Pretender!
Never to falter and never betray—
With an Amen,
We swear it again,
Orange and Green shall carry the day!

Such are the strains that arouse the spirit of Young Ireland—aye, and of Old Ireland also. Their moral is self-reliance and internal union.

Young Ireland is ardent and eager. Her fiery vehemence is a useful ingredient in our great constitutional warfare, when tempered by the judgment and experience of her elder friend and namesake.

Old Ireland has seen much and struggled much. Old Ireland has been the victor in *one* prolonged and hard-fought contest: a triumph due to her virtue, her wisdom, and her perseverance.

I bid them both God speed. The sagacity of the one, restraining (but not extinguishing) the impetuous ardour of the other, will produce a combination of qualities resistless in their union.

CHAPTER XIX.

Acres.—By my valour, then, Sir Lucius, forty yards is a good distance • • • I tell you, Sir Lucius, the farther off he is, the cooler I shall take my aim.

Sir Lucius.—Faith, then, I suppose you would aim at him best of all if he was out of sight!

Acres.—No, Sir Lucius—but I should think forty, or eight-and thirty yards—Do, my dear Sir Lucius, let me bring him down at a long shot!

The Rivals.

O'Connell's next step was to bring the Repeal question into the Dublin Corporation. Early in February, 1843, he gave notice that on Tuesday the 21st of the month, he would move a resolution affirmatory of the right of Ireland to a resident parliament, and the necessity of repealing the Union.

Shortly prior to the 21st, he suddenly announced the postponement of his motion for a week. The Tory members of the corporation complained of being unfairly treated. Alderman Butt declared that he had remained in town at much personal inconvenience in order to oppose the motion, and strongly remonstrated against the postponement. O'Connell, however, was inexorable; whereupon there was a sort of trium-

phant growl amongst the opposite party, who said that he only manœuvred to get Butt out of town, from a well-grounded fear of discussing the merits of Repeal with so able an adversary.

The postponement was extremely useful. Had the discussion taken place on the day originally fixed, it would have passed off as a matter of course without exciting half the interest it afterwards created. But by putting it off, an additional fillip was given to the public mind. The anti-Repealers alleged that O'Connell was shrinking from Butt; the Repealers indignantly denied the accusation. People upon both sides were thus set talking over the matter, and the public curiosity was wound up to a pitch of intensity when the day for the discussion arrived.

Perhaps O'Connell had planned this, in order to give additional éclat to the discomfiture he intended for Butt and his brethren.

And a signal triumph he achieved. The Unionists had long been in the habit of saying, "O'Connell and his party have always kept out of the way of discussing this question—if we had them face to face we could expose their delusions." They had now got an opportunity of realizing their boast.

The Assembly-House in William-street was crowded to the utmost. A vast concourse of

people thronged the streets without, unable to obtain admittance, yet rooted to the spot by the interest which the question awakened in all breasts. Twice or thrice in the course of the day I passed through the crowd, and the people invariably asked me "how Repeal was going on?" and "Who was speaking now?" with as eager an anxiety as if the success of the Repeal in the Dublin Corporation would secure its final and immediate triumph.

O'Connell's opening speech occupied four hours and ten minutes. He had arranged the entire subject under nine distinct propositions. These were—

1. The capability and capacity of the Irish nation for an independent legislature.
2. The perfect right of Ireland to have a domestic parliament.
3. That that right was fully established by the transactions of 1782.
4. That the most beneficial effects to Ireland resulted from her parliamentary independence.
5. The utter incompetence of the Irish parliament to annihilate the Irish constitution by the Union.
6. That the Union was no contract or bargain; that it was carried by the grossest corruption and bribery, added to force, fraud, and terror.

7. That the Union produced the most disastrous results to Ireland.

8. That the Union can be abolished by peaceable and constitutional means, without the violation of law, and without the destruction of property or life.

9. That the most salutary results, and none other, must arise from a Repeal of the Union.

"These," said O'Connell, "are the nine propositions which I came here to day to demonstrate; I say to demonstrate, not as relying on any intellectual powers of my own, or any force of talent, but from the truth and plainness of the propositions themselves."

His speech was luminous and masterly. Notwithstanding its length, the physical vigour of the orator continued unimpaired to the end.

The *Nation's* description of O'Connell's harangue is so accurate and so discriminating, that I cannot do better than quote it:

"O'Connell," says that journal, "may have made more eloquent speeches—speeches more calculated to heat the blood and stir the passions, but he never excelled this one, as an elaborate and masterly statement of a great case. The arrangement he adopted was remarkably skilful and judicious. He threw down, as it were, a single proof, and heaped others in succession

upon the top of it till they grew up to a gigantic pyramid which all the world might recognize. The effect of this process upon the audience was magical. The truth seemed to dawn upon them like the rising sun, growing plainer and plainer by degrees, till at length as he drew near his peroration, it admitted of neither question nor dispute, and men seemed to say to each other with exulting looks, ‘this is unanswerable.’”

Such was the oration which Mr. Butt was obliged to reply to. It is not the least disparagement to his abilities to say that his reply was a perfect failure. There was a case made against him which *could not* be rebutted. In the total absence of legitimate argument, he was compelled to resort to small dexterities, such as challenging—not the doctrine that the Irish parliament was incompetent to effect its own destruction ; but the alleged consequences of that doctrine, which Mr. Butt asserted would invalidate all the post-union acts of the imperial parliament. Mr. Butt also prophesied that as forty years had now elapsed since the Union, we might look forward to some future good results from that measure ; a prediction which he tried to sustain by alleging that after the lapse of forty years the Scottish Union had begun to bear fruits of benefit to Scotland. He defended the Irish Church

Establishment on the ground that it was the duty of every state "*to consecrate itself to God*;" just as if the mode of "consecrating" Ireland to God, was to invest the pastors of a tenth part of the population with a legal power to fleece the entire people! He strongly urged "repose" for Ireland; just as if a wronged and suffering nation ever gained anything by silent acquiescence in her injuries!

Whilst Mr. Butt spoke, O'Connell repeatedly exclaimed, "I never made so unanswered a speech! Why, he doesn't even try to make a case!" The simple solution of this was, that in the midst of an Irish assembly, there was no case to be made. Butt once or twice essayed Spring Rice's expedient of alleging our "giant-stride prosperity;" but he speedily experienced that although such assertions might call down vociferous plaudits in an English House of Commons, they could not elicit a single cheer even from his own Conservative backers in the Irish Corporation; for to *all* in that assembly the adverse facts were too well and too painfully known.

It is not amiss to observe that the high Tory *Warder* newspaper, the ablest organ of the anti-Repeal party, and to which Mr. Butt has often been a literary contributor, furnishes us in its number for the 5th Oct., 1844, with the follow-

ing emphatic contradiction of Spring Rice's Irish-prosperity-case:

"Squalid half starvation is the desperate lot of the Irish peasant—destitution which no exertion of his own can relieve; there is no labour too hard for him—he shrinks from no toil or hardship—but employment there is none for him; privation and misery, which would not be borne for two days by Englishmen without the riot of insurrection, are here endured from weary month to month with a stoical patience."

It may be easily supposed that the allegation of "Irish Prosperity" did not meet an encouraging reception from men, who, though holding various politics, were yet perfectly cognizant of the dreary facts thus announced on high Protestant authority. Mr. Butt was accordingly obliged to pass on to some more available claptrap.

The debate was adjourned till the following day, when it was resumed with much ability by other members of the Corporation. Mr. Staunton's speech was a first-rate financial statement. The debate was a second time adjourned.

On the third day the public anxiety continued unabated. The vicinity of the Assembly House was again densely crowded. Several speakers preceded O'Connell, who rose to reply at two o'clock.

No report, no description, could possibly do

justice to that magnificent reply. O'Connell took up in succession all the objections of all his opponents and demolished them all one by one. The whole phalanx of Unionists looked like pygmies in the grasp of a giant. The dexterities of Butt—some of which had been plausibly managed—shrank and withered into nothing when touched by O'Connell. The consciousness of a great moral triumph seemed to animate his voice—his glance—his gestures. Never had I heard him so eloquent; never had I witnessed so noble a display of his transcendent powers.

The “house” divided on the question; forty-one members to fifteen affirming the principle of Repeal by a majority of twenty-six. The decisive blow thus struck in the metropolitan corporation was promptly followed up by all the reformed corporations in the kingdom. Nothing could be more complete than the victory of the Dublin Corporators. The *Evening Mail*, which had long puffed and blustered on the side of the Unionists, clearly saw that no rational case could be made against Repeal; and it therefore, with becoming prudence, gravely advised the enemies of Irish legislative independence in the Cork town council *not to argue the question at all*; but simply to record their political servility by silent votes.

The impulse given to Repeal throughout the kingdom appeared in a rapid augmentation of the rent. The national question was now enthroned, moreover, in the different municipalities ; and the temper and ability with which it was discussed in those assemblies, demonstrated the powerful hold it had taken on the thinking and intelligent mercantile classes of the kingdom.

It was a great stroke—that Dublin Corporation debate.

CHAPTER XX.

O ! come then, ERIN, come away
O haste, my love, nor longer stay.
O haste ! thy cruel sister leave,
Her words are false, her smiles deceive ;
UNION, she cries, with viperous breath—
UNION with *her*—is ERIN's death.

Beauties of the Press.

The ensuing summer and autumn were rendered remarkable by the great gatherings called "Monster Meetings." The utility of those meetings lay in the evidence they afforded that the voice of the nation was for Repeal. Whig and Tory alike had actively propagated the falsehood that the people cared nothing for Repeal. The people in 1843 turned out in their multitudinous strength to give the lie to that laboriously reiterated calumny.

It is not my purpose to enter on any detail of the monster meetings. The reader is already familiar with their characteristics and their purpose. They were all perfectly peaceful. The resolutions passed at each of them expressed the most fervid determination to persevere.

O'Connell sometimes alluded to the beauties of

the natural scenery. At the Clifden meeting he thus expressed himself :

“ I love the wild and majestic scenes through which I have this day passed in coming to your meeting. Perhaps I might be justified in saying that nature did not intend me for a politician ; but that, judging from my feelings, I ought rather to have spent my life in the quiet and undisturbed admiration and enjoyment of nature’s beauty and magnificence. The scenery I have this day passed has made me think so. It filled my soul with a thrilling and indefinable sensation to behold that wild and swelling morass encompassed by cloud-capt and majestic mountains—the regions of the storm and the mist—and the quiet lake surrounded by high and heath-covered banks, or sometimes embossed amongst trees, its surface scarcely disturbed by the soft and perfumed autumnal breeze ; whilst the tiny waves with which it was rippled, seemed to smile approbation upon us as our procession passed along its banks. I love the music of the running waters, the silvery echoes of the mountain rill, and the sound of the torrent rushing over the brow of the precipice. They seem to whisper to my soul the joys of youth, to arouse the energies of manhood, and to dictate to me a command that I could not refuse to obey, to use

every energy of my soul, every power of my mind, every faculty of my being, to make our majestic yet neglected country, the garden and the paradise for which nature has so obviously designed it."

There were altogether some forty-five monster meetings, quite enough to develop the genuine sentiments of Ireland upon the Union, were any such evidence wanted.

An important accession to the cause this year was that of William Smith O'Brien, member for Limerick county: a gentleman who had long tenaciously adhered to the delusive hope that "justice to Ireland" might be obtained from the united parliament; but who, on the failure of his motion for a parliamentary inquiry into Irish grievances, was compelled to despair of any good from such a source. His motion was prefaced with a speech of great ability, fraught with extensive and accurate information as to the wrongs sustained by Ireland. He sought inquiry. As a matter of course it was refused; prosecution of the Irish leaders was resolved on; and William Smith O'Brien tendered his adhesion to the National Association.

A slight outline of his career will interest the Irish public.

He was born in October, 1803. His remote ancestors were the royal O'Briens, of whose

family Brian Boroimhe was a member. He is the second son of the late Sir Edward O'Brien, bart., of Dromoland, County Clare, and heir to the estates of his maternal grandfather, Mr. William Smith. He spent three years at Harrow School, and took his degree at Trinity College, Cambridge. In 1828 he was brought into parliament by his father for the borough of Ennis ; a close borough to which the O'Brien family and the late Lord Fitzgerald alternately possessed the nomination. He ardently supported the Catholic claims, and enrolled himself a member of the Catholic Association in the year of his return to parliament. He did not, in the House of Commons, give a regular support to the Tory ministry, although his father was a politician of the class called "Liberal Conservatives;" but after the Duke of Wellington carried emancipation and lost the support of the ultra-Tories, Mr. O'Brien became a supporter in general of his government; voting, however, against it, upon some questions involving constitutional principles. In 1831 he lost his seat on the dissolution which followed the defeat of the Whigs on the Reform Bill. On that measure Mr. O'Brien did not vote, being absent from London; but he voted against General Gascoigne's motion declaring that the number and proportion of English

representatives ought to continue undiminished. In 1832 he was invited to stand for Ennis on the liberal interest; but having transferred his residence from the County Clare to the County Limerick, he declined to stand. In 1834 he re-entered parliament for the County of Limerick, and from that year until 1843, he generally acted with the liberal Whigs, giving them an independent support, but opposing them whenever he deemed them in the wrong; as, for instance, on the Jamaica question. During their tenure of office he neither asked nor received from the Whigs any favour for himself or his family.

Such is the outline of Mr. Smith O'Brien's political career prior to 1843. It displays a single minded consistency in the pursuit of political truth. His motion on behalf of Ireland was couched in the following words:—

“That this House will resolve itself into a committee, for the purpose of taking into consideration the causes of discontent at present prevailing in Ireland, with a view to the redress of grievances, and to the establishment of a system of just and impartial government in that part of the united kingdom.”

The rejection of that motion by the House was of service to the cause of Repeal, for it de-

cided the mover to join the Repeal agitation. He brought to the cause great practical ability ; a complete mastery of the details of public business, acquired from his long experience in parliamentary committees ; and an honest zeal of which the enthusiasm was tempered and regulated by a calm and accurate judgment. His descent from the proudest line in Irish history gratified the Celtic prepossessions of the people ; his social position commanded respect, and his Protestant creed afforded one more proof in addition to the many already existing, that Irish nationality is of no particular sect or persuasion ; and that amongst those who own its sacred influence, the most ardent, the most active, the most useful may be, and have been, Protestants.

On his junction with the Repeal Association he immediately founded the "Parliamentary Committee," whose occupation is to watch and report upon all bills affecting Ireland in their progress through parliament.

The British public have no knowledge whatever of the real nature of the committees of the Repeal Association. They are practical schools of legislation. The labours of the gentlemen composing those committees are directed to amass and disseminate information on matters with which the Irish legislator ought to be fami-

liar. Of the extent and variety of their duties some conception may be formed from the following list of Reports drawn up and circulated by the Association :—

- 1.—Report on the number of Representatives to which Ireland is entitled.
- 2.—,, on Ecclesiastical Revenues.
- 3.—,, on the state of the Franchise in Ireland.
- 4.—,, on Corporate Reform.
- 5.—,, on the means by which the Union was carried.
- 6.—,, on the Re-construction of the Irish House of Commons.
- 7.—,, on the Financial Injustice inflicted on Ireland.
- 8.—,, on the Resolutions of the Volunteers in 1782.
- 9, 10.—Two Reports on the Resolutions passed in Ireland against the Union.
- 11.—Report on the Fisheries of Ireland.
- 12, 13, 14.—Three Reports on the Comparative State of Crime in England and Ireland.
- 15.—Report on the disastrous effects of the Union on the Woollen, Silk, and Cotton Manufactures of Ireland.
- 16.—,, on the Appointment and Duties of Repeal Wardens.
- 17.—,, on Lord Stanley's Registration Bill.
- 18.—,, on the Remedies proposed for the Evils of the Poor Law.
- 19.—,, on the Arbitration Committee.
- 20.—,, First General Report of Parliamentary Committee.
- 21.—,, on the Borough Franchise.
- 22.—,, on the Removal of Irish Poor from England.
- 23.—,, on Joint-stock Banking.
- 24.—,, on the Ordnance Memoir of Ireland.
- 25.—,, on the Fiscal Relations between Great Britain and Ireland.
- 26.—,, on the Irish Municipal Amendment Bill.
- 27.—,, on the County Franchise of Ireland and Lord Eliot's Bill.
- 28.—,, on Commercial Tariffs.

- 29.—Report on Arms' Returns (Ireland).
- 30.—,, Second Report on Lord Eliot's Registration Bill.
- 31.—,, on Glass Duties.
- 32.—,, on the Estimates of 1844–5.
- 33.—,, on the Industrial Resources of Ireland.
- 34.—,, on Petit Juries.
- 35.—,, on the Hurrying of Bills through Parliament.
- 36.—,, on Opening Letters in the Post Office.
- 37.—,, on the Attendance of Irish Members in Parliament.
- 38.—,, Second Report on Irish Fisheries.

From the above catalogue it will appear that the Repeal leaders have devoted their labours not merely to the organizing of the people, but to the equally essential task of diffusing through the land a body of information calculated to exalt and fortify the movement, by enlisting the intellect of Ireland as well as her feelings in favour of home government.

The admirable regularity and effective working of the Association are mainly due to the care and ability of its Secretary, Mr. Ray. That gentleman conducts the multitudinous correspondence of the Association, smooths difficulties, disentangles and arranges the most complicated details of public business, with a quiet, easy mastery, resulting partly from long habit, but far more from natural sagacity. His acquaintance with Irish political matters is accurate and extensive. He has a singularly *tabular* mind, well stored with information, historic and statistic; and he

can, at a moment's notice, produce to you any fact or detail from his copious stores that you wish to lay your hand on. Each item occupies its place in his mental repositories, duly labeled and ticketed. Few public societies have so able and efficient an officer. He is popular, not only from his official merits, but also from his great and well-known private worth.

Mr. Ray is the originator of the Repeal Reading Rooms. He established them in several towns on his Repeal mission at an early period of the Repeal Association. The first of these rooms opened, was at Newcastle, county Limerick.

The Reading-Room system is of great practical value; and although not yet fully extended, it has already developed its utility in furnishing local centres to combine and permanently organize the county patriots; centres where political information can be constantly acquired; social rallying points for the provincial Repealers, where the intellect is exercised and improved; where habits of morality are strengthened by the inducement afforded to the people to employ their leisure hours in mental recreation instead of sensual indulgence.

CHAPTER XXI.

The King of France with twenty thousand men,
March'd up the hill and then—march'd down again!

The autumn of 1843 was advancing to its close; some three or four “monster meetings” yet remained to be held. Of these the Clontarf gathering was fixed for Sunday the 8th of October. The Executive had hitherto looked on at the Repeal agitation in passive imbecility. They now resolved on a sudden demonstration of vigour. Late on the afternoon of Saturday the 7th, a proclamation by the Viceroy, Lord De Grey, was issued from the Castle, prohibiting the intended meeting of the morrow at Clontarf. O’Connell, apprehensive of a sanguinary attack upon the people in case of their disregarding this proclamation, issued a counter-proclamation from the Corn Exchange, enjoining the Repealers to abandon their purpose of assembling. Messengers were despatched into the country in all di-

rections to meet the people on their way to the metropolis, and to send them back to their respective homes.

Meanwhile the government placed Dublin in a state of siege. All the guards at the barracks and at the Castle were doubled ; and for the especial protection of Earl De Grey from Repeal violence, a squadron of dragoons and two extra companies of foot were quartered in the Lower Castle Yard. Aldborough House was garrisoned with a regiment of infantry ; at night there were patrols established through the city—the roads in the vicinity were patrolled by parties of mounted police. Three vessels in the river had their guns run out, commanding the spot where the meeting was intended to have been held ; the guns at the Pigeon House Fort were also run out so as to command Clontarf, and prepared for immediate action. The Rhadamanthus and Dee war steamers brought the 87th Royal Irish Fusileers to Dublin. The 34th regiment arrived in Dublin on Sunday morning from Glasgow after a stormy passage. As that regiment marched through the city the multitude lustily cheered them ; the commanding officer mistaking the cheer for a hostile indication, ordered the men to halt and fix bayonets ! The crowd cheered again—the officer was wiser the second time and quietly marched his men to their barracks.

The 5th Dragoon Guards were stationed at Clontarf. The men were accoutred for active service; each man and horse being provisioned for four-and-twenty hours. The 60th Rifles were stationed in their immediate vicinity; each soldier was served with sixty rounds of ball cartridge. A brigade of the Royal Horse Artillery occupied a position near Clontarf Sheds, with four six-pounders limbered and ready for immediate action. There were also the 11th Hussars and the 54th regiment of infantry stationed near the Sheds.

We peruse this record of vigorous imbecility with a feeling of surprise at the insensate folly of the government. A "monster armament" is brought against unarmed, peaceful multitudes, to prevent their assembling to petition the legislature for the repeal of an unpopular statute! It is impossible not to be struck with the similarity of the means whereby the Union was carried, and those whereby it is sustained. Pitt and Castle-reagh corrupted and coerced—Ebrington bribes Unionists with the lure of Castle patronage—De Grey brings down troops to overcome, if he can, the Repealers! Pitt poured 137,000 bayonets into Ireland to carry the Union—Peel pours in 30,000 bayonets to preserve it!

The whole exhibition excited no other feeling

than that of contemptuous ridicule. The display of military force could not disconcert men who meditated no appeal to arms. The Tories however declared that the military occupation of Ireland was indispensable to preserve the connexion of the countries. What a pregnant commentary on the Union! The Union, which was to have fused, consolidated, identified the nations, so that they were no longer to have been “twain, but one flesh”—this consolidating Union lasts for three-and-forty years, at the end of which period (on the Tory showing) it requires 30,000 troops to restrain one of the “*consolidated*” parties from breaking loose from the other! I repeat—what a pregnant commentary on the Union!

Meanwhile the Repealers displayed no relaxation of zeal or activity. The first weekly meeting of the Association after the Clontarf affair was so crowded that the Committee were obliged to adjourn it from the Corn Exchange to the Theatre in Abbey-street. Prosecutions were threatened, and great excitement prevailed. On that day, and on the two following Mondays, the chair was successively occupied by John O'Connell, by myself, and by Mr. O'Neill of Bunowen Castle, who threw into his address a genuinely Irish spirit of chivalrous devotion to the cause.

Then came the prosecutions, under the ma-

nagement of the Attorney-General, Mr. T. B. C. Smith. At first the proceedings excited curiosity, but their dull monotony soon palled upon the public mind. The traversers kept up their spirits despite this monster-nuisance. One of their attorneys made a serio-comic complaint of the Court, the agents, and the defendants, who all seemed engaged in a conspiracy to deprive the trial of becoming gravity and dignity.

"Heaven help me," quoth this worthy gentleman, "I have got no peace among 'em all! I want my clients to swear an affidavit—they've levanted somewhere, and are n't to be found. Well, there's a hurry-scurry after them, and at last they're discovered, sitting for their pictures to some vagabond coxcomb of an artist from London. By-and-bye I want Mr. * * *" (a brother solicitor) "on a very pressing matter—he's invisible—another hue-and-cry—at length he's caught in a back parlour, with his thumbs in his waistcoat pockets, strutting up and down in a dignified attitude, and looking as majestic as he can for some other grinning, picture-drawing scamp. We go back to the court—the traversers are cracking their jokes among themselves in their box, and my lords are poking their necks over the desk to find out if they can what the devil the fun is all about! Counsellor Fitzgib-

bon does his duty by his client, whereupon the Attorney-General jumps up and sends him a three-cocked invitation in open court to come and be shot at twelve paces!"

The memorabilia of the trial are familiar to the entire British public—the refusal of the caption to the traversers—the defective jury-list—the shameless packing of the jury—the admission of a species of evidence against the traversers which was actually condemned as inadmissible at the very same period by the Court of Queen's Bench at Westminster*—the charge by the Lord Chief Justice against "the other side"—and finally the wrongful imprisonment.

The imprisonment, however, was a great point gained for the Orangemen. No matter by what means accomplished, it was a subject for loud exultation. The traversers were at last in jail—convicted of a "conspiracy;" which "conspiracy" no ten rational men outside the court and jury-box believed to have any existence at all!

The exclusion of Catholics from the jury-list, because they were supposed to be Repealers, was defended by Sir James Graham in the following very significant manner :

* Viz., the admission of newspaper articles in evidence against men who never saw them.

"We wanted," said the right honourable baronet, "to avoid the partiality necessarily arising from preconceived opinions favourable to Repeal on the part of the jurors."

Did it occur to Sir James that there *might* be just as strong a partiality on the opposite side, arising from the preconceived opinions of jurors adverse to Repeal?

When a man says, "Oh, don't put Repealers into the jury-box—they'll be sure to acquit!" it certainly sounds extremely like saying, "*Do* put anti-Repealers into the box—they'll be sure to convict!"

CHAPTER XXII.

Who helpeth not himself, Fortune disowns ;
Who braves all obstacles will win i' th' end.
Success crowns perseverance—coward souls
Who shrink from work shall never win work's guerdon.

Herbert Smith.

The Orange and Tory party now had their triumph. Truly the government had deserved success, if a reckless disregard of all decency in their vindictive pursuit could entitle them to victory !

But the verdict was obtained, no matter how ! and sentence was pronounced, and there was a great and mighty glorifying in all Orangeland. The *Mail* announced that the traversers had been conveyed to their prison with less éclat than had often attended a coal-porter's wedding. That Repeal could survive the incarceration of seven of its leaders, was deemed quite impossible. The cause was extinct ; that was loudly announced. The Repeal Rent would dwindle to nothing. The "deluded people," having their eyes opened to the wickedness, folly, and peril of

their evil ways by the well-merited punishment of their chiefs, would be scared from any further connexion with the movement. They would no longer furnish the sinews of war to a set of men who could not keep their heads out of Sir Robert Peel's net. The leaders were seized—the flock would scatter. And above all, the mischievous magic of O'Connell's legal infallibility, which so long had kept the Repealers together, would now be destroyed. The spell was dissolved—the magician would henceforth be powerless.

Such were the glorifications of the Tory party on O'Connell's imprisonment. Bets were laid as to whether the Repealers would hold their usual meeting on the following Monday. The conservative party were firmly convinced that they would not dare to assemble.

The committee met on the evening of the day which saw O'Connell consigned to a prison. The room was overflowing, and great excitement necessarily prevailed. It was surmised that the government would proclaim down the association on the Monday morning, and arrest the principal Repealers who were still at large. On the question being discussed as to who should occupy the chair, a post of possible danger, numerous gentlemen volunteered themselves; but Mr. Smith O'Brien said that as he conceived that the strug-

gle against despotic power could perhaps be most effectively made in his person, he claimed the chief post of peril as a particular favour. It was, however, deemed more advisable that Mr. O'Brien should occupy the place usually filled by Mr. O'Connell.

Monday arrived. It soon became manifest that the Repealers were not scared by the recent prosecution. They mustered in such crowds that the Conciliation Hall was filled long before the hour announced for the commencement of the day's business, and thousands who could not obtain standing room were obliged to go away. The Tory predictions did not seem likely to be realized. "There was no shrinking," either among the leaders or the people.

The chair was occupied on Monday by Mr. Caleb Powell, the Protestant representative of the County Limerick; and on Tuesday by another Protestant gentleman, Captain Seaver of Heath Hall, near Newry. There was a sustained, yet quiet energy in the entire proceedings. There was the most intense enthusiasm combined with the most cautious discretion. Every face expressed firm resolution to encounter all risks that might beset the pursuit of Repeal; but at the same time to play the game warily as well as firmly. The minds of men were braced and

strung for a mighty effort. It was glorious to behold the crowds that filled the national hall at the moment when the thunders of the government were directed against Ireland's nationality. The people never assumed a loftier port or a nobler attitude than when they calmly bade defiance to tyrannic power, and opposed the simple might of popular opinion to the chicanery of perverted law and the formidable array of British bayonets. The troops that filled the land, and the monster-indictment, alike were impotent to scare them from a course recommended by its own intrinsic justice and endeared to their hearts by every sentiment of national pride. They hailed with delight the entrance of the men who were accustomed to take a prominent part in their proceedings. The roof rang again with the joyous acclamations that greeted their appearance.

The prosecution evidently had not paralyzed the Repeal Exchequer. There was actually an inconvenient rivalry to hand in money. Each man was eager to pour into the treasury the contribution entrusted to his care, and thus were several hours successively occupied. The first week's receipts amounted to £2,593 18s. 2d.; which sum was considerably exceeded on several subsequent occasions.

Almost immediately on O'Connell's imprisonment, the several municipal corporations of Ireland sent deputies to the metropolis; where, having been refused admission to the prison for the purpose of presenting addresses to the captives, they assembled at O'Connell's house in Merrion-square, and there agreed on a solemn declaration that Ireland required a Domestic Parliament to develop her resources and secure her prosperity. This declaration, emanating not from noisy agitators, but from the very flower of the trading and mercantile community of Ireland, was necessarily calculated to produce a deep impression.

While these events occurred out of doors, let us take a peep within the prison walls.

O'Connell, on the evening of his incarceration, had exclaimed, "Thank God I am in jail for Ireland!" He intuitively felt how much Peel's false move tended to augment the strength of the national cause. All the prisoners dined together, and the party most certainly wore anything but a tragical air. They all enjoyed the exhilaration of spirits arising from a consciousness that whatever inconvenience they might sustain, their imprisonment would accelerate the triumph of the cause that was nearest to their hearts.

They were, for the first few days, occupied with the bustle of fixing themselves in their new quarters. At last they settled down into something like their usual habits. Charles Gavan Duffy, the editor of the *Nation*; Dr. Gray, the editor of the *Freeman*; and Richard Barrett, the editor of the *Pilot*, found abundant employment in superintending their several journals. The moments unoccupied by business they devoted to study, or to taking exercise in the adjoining gardens. Mr. Duffy, under the impression that the imprisonment would last a year, announced his purpose of reading through Carte's Life of Ormond in three folio volumes. Mr. Ray still exercised his supervision of the affairs of the association. John O'Connell wrote his amusing and instructive "Repeal Dictionary," which appeared in the weekly press; and which, when finished, will deserve to be collected and published in a volume.* Steele read Kane's "Industrial Resources of Ireland," and defaced the fair pages of the work with innumerable marks of admira-

* Since the above was written, the Association have resolved on publishing in a collected form John O'Connell's very useful work, which will lose none of its interest with the Irish people from the circumstance of its being a monument of its writer's undiminished devotion to their freedom whilst a prisoner for his labours in their cause.

tion. Barrett was ready for fun, frisk, joyous frolic of every sort, and more than once kept the incarcerated coterie in roars of laughter by attitudinizing and grimacing in a style that might have done honour to Liston. Nearly all the prisoners contributed to the pages of a jeu d'esprit called the Prison Gazette, which came out on Fridays after dinner, and in which they quizzed each other and their friends with merry malice. In short, there never was a set of jail-birds who bore so lightly and joyously the hours of imprisonment, or whose deprivation of freedom was more soothed by the kind and sympathetic offices of friends.

They had access to two gardens. In one of these was a mound with a summer-house on the top. The mound they amused themselves by calling "Tara Hill;" the summer-house was termed "Conciliation Hall." In the other garden they erected a large marquee which they styled "Mullaghmast," and in this marquee were received the numerous deputations who bore addresses to the "convicts" from the different quarters of the kingdom.

I learned from a gentleman who was present on one of these occasions that O'Connell replied to the bearers of an address in the following words:—

"Tell your friends that my heart is joyful, my spirits are buoyant, my health is excellent, my hopes are high. My imprisonment is not irksome to me, for I feel and know that it will, under Providence, be the means of making our country a nation again. I am glad I am in prison. There wanted but this to my career. I have laboured for Ireland—refused office, honour, and emolument for Ireland—I have prayed and hoped and watched for Ireland—there was yet one thing wanted—that I should be in jail for Ireland. That has now been added to the rest, thanks to our enemies! and I cordially rejoice at it."

O'Connell, in the course of that day, was waited on by a party of American tourists. When they arrived, he was standing on the top of "Tara Hill." They doffed their hats and remained at the foot of the mound until desired to walk up. "You are probably more visited here," said one of them, "than if you were at large." "Yes," replied the Liberator, "and *here* I cannot use the excuse of '*not at home!*'"

The progress of Repeal during his imprisonment enchanted him. "The people," said he, "are behaving nobly. I was at first a little afraid, despite all my teaching, that at such a trying crisis they would have done either too

much or too little—either have been stung into an outbreak, or else awed into apathy. Neither has happened—blessed be God!—the people are acting nobly! What it is to have such a people to lead!"

He rejoiced especially over the excellent training of the Repeal Association ; praised the young talent called forth by the movement, bestowing particular eulogy on Mac Nevin and Barry.

"In the days of the Catholic Association," said he, "I used to have more trouble than I can express in keeping down mutiny. I always arrived in town about the 25th of October, and on my arrival I invariably found some jealousies, some squabbles, some fellow trying to be leader, which gave me infinite annoyance. But now all goes right—no man is jealous of any other man ; each does his best for the general cause."

Speaking of his own pacific policy, he remarked it was a curious coincidence that the *Conal* of Ossian should say, "My sword hangs at my side—the blade longs to shine in my hand—but I love the peace of green Erin of the streams."

The convicted patriots received numerous presents of fruit and flowers. A patriotic confectioner presented them with two monster-cakes. Mr. Scriber of Westmoreland-street sent them seven musical boxes to cheer their imprisonment ;

and it is said that immediately on the arrival of this harmonious cargo, the prisoners evinced their satisfaction with more musical zeal than taste—namely, by setting the seven boxes all playing together!

Mr. Steele one day placed a stone which he dignified with the name of the Liach Fail, or the Stone of Destiny, on the side of the mimic Tara Hill in the garden, calling on Duffy to doff his hat in honour of the august ceremony.

With these and such like helps and devices did the prisoners try to cheat the hours of that bondage, which, under every circumstance of mitigation, must ever be oppressive and wearisome to men of ardent minds and active habits. One day John O'Connell made some remark on the high gloomy prison buildings, which excluded the view of the country from the dining room :

“I am better pleased,” said his father, “that the view is excluded. To see the hills and fields and sea coast, and to feel that you were debarred from the freedom of walking among them, were a worse affliction than to be deprived altogether of the sight. It would tantalize too much.”

But these little fits of gloom were merely passing clouds. There was great and enduring consolation in the steady progress the Repeal cause was making daily. The meetings of the

association wore an eminently practical and business-like character. There was no wild, driftless rhapsodizing. Men spoke to the purpose, and not at immeasurable length. Their eloquence—the more effective because compressed within reasonable limits—was alternated with the delivery of the vast remittances which showed how stedfastly the nation backed the demand for independence. The money was an index that could not be mistaken of the people's resolve. When a poor and oppressed people give their money, they are ready to give everything else—life itself, if needed to achieve their object.

It excites a smile to reflect on the utter discomfiture of the government in the result of their monster-prosecution. I do not merely mean with regard to the final reversal of judgment by the Lords; but with reference to the ludicrous failure of the verdict, sentence, and imprisonment, in producing those results which were so confidently prophesied by the anti-Irish gang who hounded on Sir Robert Peel to the experiment. It was prophesied—

First, that a salutary terror would be struck into the souls of the Repealers. When their leader was made amenable for his crimes to the outraged law, his followers would shrink from exposing themselves to the like penalty.

But the wicked Repealers were not quite so easily terrified. They mustered at the Corn Exchange in larger numbers and with greater energy than ever.

Secondly, it was thought that *if* the people could not be immediately scared, their indignation at the legal outrage on their Liberator might at least goad them into a *useful* émeute; for which contingency a potent armament had been prepared. Repeal might be drowned in a river of blood.

But again—the provoking people knew better than to treat their kind friends to an émeute. They were not quite so reckless and impulsive as those sagacious speculators had deemed possible. Instead of taking up pikes, they thronged to the Conciliation Hall to supply themselves with Repeal cards!

Thirdly, there were among the Tory editors and politicians, good sympathising souls, who were sorry to see the knowing managers at the Corn Exchange gull their poor dupes out of the Repeal Rent. They said “Shut up O’Connell, and the rent will immediately dwindle down to nothing. The Irish ‘treason’ will lose its supplies.”

But, alack! this benevolent hope was doomed to be also disappointed. For the fourteen weeks preceding the imprisonment, the Repeal rent had

amounted to £6679 12s. 6d; for the fourteen weeks that O'Connell was in jail, the National Treasury swelled up to £25,712 17s. 2d.

Fourthly—It was said and sung in all moods, tenses, and measures, that the imprisonment would for ever deprive O'Connell of the prestige of legal invulnerability. The people would fly from the impostor, now unmasked by the searching operation of the law.

But the people were so wickedly obtuse that they could not be made to understand how O'Connell's reputation as a lawyer could suffer from a notoriously virulent and one-sided charge, and a verdict so battered and shattered and damaged as to lose all moral weight in the estimation of all rational and unprejudiced men. They did not require any experiments in the Court of Queen's Bench to convince them that twelve hot Tories could easily be got to seize with alacrity on an opportunity of finding O'Connell guilty. The Liberator's legal prestige accordingly remained unscathed and unimpaired.

Fifthly—As the glorious result of all the above sagacious speculations, *Repeal would be extinct.*

But Repeal turned out to possess an unexpected vitality. To the utter dismay and astonishment of the prophets, instead of becoming extinct it

towers aloft in new pride and strength ; it expands and fortifies its influences ; it assumes an attitude of majesty and power far greater than it had previously exhibited ; it daily receives fresh adhesions from important recruits ; it has taken such a grasp of the national heart that a prudent statesman may now not unreasonably ask himself, whether the refusal of a demand so just, so righteous, so essential to Irish prosperity, and on which the desire of Ireland is unalterably fixed, can be persevered in without deeply imperiling the integrity of the British empire ?

Thus, with retributive justice, did the means employed to stifle the Repeal, discomfit the men who made use of them, by imparting new force to the movement ; increasing the energy of its former friends, and enlarging its ranks with new and valuable auxiliaries.

The imprisonment further demonstrated to our enemies that O'Connell had created machinery which, even in his absence, could work the national question. It was manifest that Repeal could now go on *without* O'Connell. This was an unwelcome discovery to those who had fondly persuaded themselves that the agitation was the breath of his nostrils, and could not survive his removal from the scene.

Baffled, discomfited at all points, the anti-Irish

party began to discover that it had been infinitely wiser to have abstained altogether from meddling with the nationalists. As Dr. Gray tersely remarked, "O'Connell could far better afford to remain in prison than Peel could afford to keep him there."

So much for the results of the imprisonment.

But the prisoners had appealed from the decision of the Court of Queen's Bench to the House of Lords. Such an appeal seemed unpromising enough; but they felt it a duty, not less to their country than to themselves, to try every chance, however improbable, of procuring a reversal of the unjust judgment under which they suffered. The great majority of the English judges were against them. Providentially the ultimate decision lay with five law-lords, Lyndhurst, Brougham, Cottenham, Denman, and Campbell, of whom the last named three respected the constitutional rights of the Queen's subjects; detested jury-packing and partisan charges; did not comprehend how a sound and legal judgment could be based upon an unsound and illegal indictment; and accordingly, both on the merits of the case and on legal grounds, reversed the judgment of the Irish Court of Queen's Bench. The words of Lord Denman are too important to be omitted from a record, however brief, of the transaction:

"If," said his lordship, "such practices as had taken place in the present instance in Ireland should continue, the trial by jury would become a mockery, a delusion, and a snare."

Three law lords versus *two* decided the matter in favour of the prisoners. They had been thrust into jail with vindictive haste. The ultimate court of appeal now pronounced that they should not have been in jail for an instant. The *Times*, in its dismay, made a desperate effort to extract an argument against Repeal from the decision of the Lords. Thus spoke the "leading journal":

"It" (the decision) "will teach the most anti-Saxon of the Irish people—the most vehement instigators to Repeal—the most violent denouncers of England—that the only tribunal where the strict and literal construction of the law is brought to aid the impugners and the violators of law, is the highest court of that nation from which Ireland prays to be divorced: that the only place where those who have assailed England and her peerage can have justice meted, is the House of Peers in England."

The decision of the three honest law-lords will teach the people of Ireland no such thing. That there were three constitutional lords out of five was sheer accident. But there was no accident in the Saxon spirit which initiated the prosecu-

tion ; no accident in the anti-Irish tendencies of the Court of Queen's Bench ; no accident in the Saxon hate of Ireland which denied to the accused throughout the trial the ordinary privileges dictated by common justice ; no accident in the fiery speed with which the accused were hurried from the courts to the jail ; no accident in the decision of a large majority of the English judges, who confirmed the judgment delivered by their Irish brethren in a mode whereof the falsehood and the folly contended for predominance ; no accident in the indecency with which the lay-lords were struggling to negative the reversal of judgment pronounced by the law-lords, if they had not been restrained for very shame's sake by Lord Wharncliffe.

No. These things were not accidental ; and in them, each and all, do the Irish people recognize the impression of English influence and the paramount need for self-government. In them, and *not* in the lucky accident of a favourable majority (and it was the smallest possible majority) among the English law-lords, do the Irish people find the motives rationally applicable to their dealings with the Legislative Union Statute.

On the evening of the sixth of September, O'Con-

nell and his fellow-prisoners were liberated.* About ten days previously, his intimate friend, Mr. Patrick FitzPatrick of Eccles-street, had expressed to him his anticipation that the law-lords would confirm the sentence, but that the prisoners would be liberated by the exercise of the royal prerogative. "You must in that event," continued Mr. FitzPatrick, "be prepared with instant securities. How large is the amount of bail required?"

O'Connell had forgotten the amount, and descended to the governor's office to inspect the book. Mr. FitzPatrick speedily followed, and found O'Connell laughing heartily at the personal description annexed to his name in the book—*"Daniel O'Connell—complexion good."* The amount of bail was £5000 personally, and two securities in £2500 each.

"But it is idle—quite idle to talk of it!" exclaimed O'Connell; "there is not the least probability, not the smallest shadow of a chance of our being set free. No, my good friend—we shall suffer our full term."

In this conviction O'Connell continued, until the evening of the sixth. Two messengers from

* The particulars which follow were communicated to me by Mr. FitzPatrick.

the Corn Exchange rushed tumultuously into the prison with the news, vociferating in such noisy rivalry that their tidings were for a long time perfectly unintelligible. At length one of them, per force of better wind, shouted his comrade out of breath, and having reached the corridor leading to O'Connell's apartments continued to bellow, "I'm first! I'm first! I'm first!"

"What is it all about?" demanded Mr. Barrett, who was calmly perambulating the corridor.

"Only that you're free!" cried Edmond O'Hagarty (the messenger). "I'm first! I'm first. Hurrah! Where's the Liberator? I'm first!"

They rushed into a drawing-room where O'Connell was seated between two ladies, O'Hagarty in his noisy delight still shouting out, "I'm first! I'm first! You're free, Liberator! thanks be to God for that same! The judgment's reversed."

"Bah! *not* true! it *can't* be true!" replied O'Connell coolly.

"But it *is* true, Liberator!" And the messenger showed him the placard which had been printed in London announcing the fact. He examined it attentively, and said to FitzPatrick, "After all, this *may* be true"—when doubt was set at rest by the sudden appearance of the attorneys for the defence. "On the *merits!*" were

the first words of Mr. Ford, who threw his arms round O'Connell's neck and kissed him. O'Connell wore his green velvet Mullaghmast cap, and Ford wore a broad-brimmed beaver hat, oblivious in his ecstacy of the presence of the ladies. "*On the merits!*" he triumphantly repeated; "no technicalities at all—nothing but the merits!"

The news had now spread through the prison, and the other prisoners crowded to the drawing-room to learn their fate. There was a quiet sort of triumph; no boisterous joy amongst the traversers. In the course of the evening O'Connell said to my informant in a tone of deep solemnity:

"FitzPatrick, the hand of man is not in this. It is the response given by Providence to the prayers of the faithful, pious, stedfast people of Ireland."

It was near twilight when O'Connell left the prison to return to his home in Merrion-square. As he walked along the streets, the people at first gazed on him in bewildered astonishment—they could not believe the evidence of their eyes! Was O'Connell indeed free? They crowded around him to ascertain the fact—the crowds augmented—and by the time he arrived at the western end of Merrion-square his friends were obliged to form a cordon round him to avert the

inconvenient pressure of the delighted multitude. When he placed his foot on his own hall-door-step to re-enter the home from which he had for three months been inquitously exiled, the popular ecstasy became uncontrollable. Cheer after cheer rose and swelled on the air—the people gave vent to their wild delight in vociferous acclamations ; every heart beat high with pride and triumph at the liberation of the venerated leader ; not by ministerial grace or royal favour, but by the strict and stern vindication of that law which had been so grossly and nefariously outraged in the trial and “conviction.”

O’Connell appeared on the balcony and addressed the people briefly. He exhorted them to bear their victory with moderation. Let them, he said, demonstrate their fitness to rule themselves, by the spirit of conciliation and friendliness with which they should enjoy their triumph.

On the next day (Saturday, the 7th of September), the liberated patriots passed in procession through the leading streets of the metropolis. It was a scene of indescribable excitement. When opposite the door of the old Parliament House in College-green, the cavalcade halted ; O’Connell rose in his triumphal car, uncovered his head, and pointed with significant emphasis to the

edifice. Then there arose a mighty shout from the surrounding thousands : again and again did O'Connell, looking proudly around him, repeat his significant gesture—again and again did the myriads who thronged the broad street upraise their glad voices in deafening cheers—it was like the roar of the ocean, that proud shout of a nation's triumph and a nation's hope !

On Monday the 9th of September the Association met—the Lord Mayor of Dublin in the chair. Thousands were obliged to return from the door of the Conciliation Hall, from the incapacity of that building to contain them. Floor, benches, galleries, all were full. The enthusiasm of O'Connell's reception was beyond the power of imagination to exaggerate.

His speech embraced many topics. He exulted in the vindication of the constitution and of trial by jury.

He showed, in reply to the cavils of the enemy, that the favourable decision of the House of Lords was a direct decision *on the merits*; inasmuch as the 6th and 7th counts of the monster-indictment, which expressly charged the traversers with conspiracy to hold meetings to intimidate; counts which contained the very essence of the prosecution; counts on which judgment was directly and explicitly given

against the traversers by the Irish judges ; counts upon which the conviction and sentence were ostentatiously justified ; these 6th and 7th counts were unanimously pronounced to be utterly bad and invalid by the English judges and the English House of Lords ; although the English judges, in condemning the counts, yet sanctioned the sentence that had been based upon them, by the preposterously foolish presumption that it were not on those counts, but on some others, that the Irish bench had rested their judgment ; a presumption notoriously contradicted by the fact, and by the charges of the Irish judges themselves !

O'Connell next complimented the Whigs for their felicitous judicial appointments.

He complimented Sheil, who had been harshly censured for seeming to solicit, as a matter of favour to the traversers, some concession from the government.

" I was vexed and angry with Sheil at the time, that he should have uttered any words to which the meaning could be possibly attached of soliciting a favour on my part from Sir Robert Peel. Ah ! he ought to have known me better ! He ought to have known that I would rather have rotted in jail than condescend to accept a favour from Peel. I said from the commence-

ment—I announced it to the world—that, come what might, there should be no compromise or shrinking. There has been none, and there is not a man of us who would not have died in jail rather than sully our hands by receiving the slightest concession from our enemies. Sheil was wrong in that instance; but he is one of those who can afford to be wrong once, for his country owes him a deep debt of gratitude. O, I cannot forget his past career! his glorious career! I cannot forget how he ornamented and made interesting our struggle for emancipation. When I was going on with my dull prosy speech, wearying the public ear with the monotony of my tones and accents, and by the continual repetition of the same facts, Sheil used to burst forth in the dazzling effulgence of intellectual glory, irradiating our cause with the coruscations of his genius and the illumination of his powerful mind."

O'Connell appealed with great force to his Protestant fellow-countrymen, exhibiting the delusive quality of the fears of those who were still timid, by referring to his past pacific policy;

"What *are* you afraid of? Did we threaten? Did we menace? Did we overawe? We were strong enough to commit violence: nothing save the spirit of conciliation and love for each

other could have brought us together in such multitudinous masses without violence. In the midst of a people who love me and trust me; with more power in my hands than any monarch in Europe enjoys—[here the speaker was interrupted with vehement cheering and waving of handkerchiefs]—so situated, how have I demeaned myself? But first—how did I acquire that power?—I acquired it because of the conviction which every man, woman, and child feels that I would not abuse it. I have acquired it and retained it because I was congenial in opinion with the millions of my countrymen, and because they were perfectly persuaded that in the exercise of that power with which by their confidence they invested me, I would sedulously guard against the commission of any crime whatsoever. I have kept my compact, but I never could have done this without the assistance and co-operation of the Catholic Clergy. They saw the jealous scrutiny with which our minutest movements were watched by our Protestant brethren; they entered unreservedly into my views, and here is all the secret of my success. They knew me, they appreciated me. They knew that I was the first apostle and founder of that sect of politicians whose cardinal doctrine is this—that the greatest and most desirable of political changes may be

achieved by moral means alone, and that no human revolution is worth the effusion of one single drop of human blood. HUMAN BLOOD IS NO CEMENT FOR THE TEMPLE OF HUMAN LIBERTY."

Such were the leading topics of O'Connell's address on that important day. His manner and appearance corresponded well with the triumphant style of his harangue. Never were his spirits more elate, his step more elastic, his tone more exulting. There was a fire in his eye, an eager vivacity in his voice, a buoyancy of heart, and a vigour of intellect that beseemed a nation's chief disenthralled from unjust bondage, and impatient to devote his unfettered energies to the renewed battle for legislative freedom.

It needs not be told that the enthusiastic joy which animated Dublin was diffused through the whole kingdom. The glad news of the liberation was immediately telegraphed all over the land by signal fires. Cresset answered cresset; mountain and valley started into light! You gazed into the dark distance, and blaze after blaze sprang up. The red flame glowed in the sheltered hollow of the rock, and streamed in the light breeze on the hill-top. The heart and soul of the land rejoiced; the exulting shouts of the people were borne far on the night wind—glen, river, plain, and mountain were vocal with their triumph. Stirring sights—joyous sounds!

I was in the country at the time—150 miles from Dublin. From the roof of my house on the banks of the Bandon river, I looked on the national illumination. I omitted to reckon the number of fires, but I think it probable that from that one point not less than from sixty to seventy might have been counted.

CHAPTER XXIII.

Bold and true,
In bonnet blue,
Who fear or falsehood never knew.

Sir Walter Scott.

Mr. Steele has occupied so prominent a position in Irish agitation that a short account of his career may probably interest my readers.

“Honest Tom Steele,” as he is usually called, was born at Derrymore in the county Clare, in the year 1788. His family came from Somersetshire in the reign of Charles the Second. Their name was then Champion, which they changed to that of Steele, for reasons now unknown. William Champion, the lineal ancestor of the Head Pacifier, was, I believe, an officer in Monmouth’s regiment. He established himself near Nenagh in the county Tipperary. His first experiment as a settler was inauspicious, inasmuch as the Tipperary folk three times burned his house over his head—the proprietor on each occasion narrowly escaping with his life! Un-

willing to incur the perils of a fourth combustion, he migrated to the more pacific county of Clare where his posterity have ever since continued to reside.

Steele received a University education at Cambridge, where he obtained distinction for his scientific acquirements.

The death of an uncle placed him in possession of his family property in Clare, just at the time when the Spanish nation rose in insurrection against the tyrannical King Ferdinand the Seventh.

Steele, whose love of the cause of universal liberty has ever been associated with that total forgetfulness of self which the world calls imprudence, immediately resolved to assist with his hand and fortune the Spanish insurgents. Regardless of the results of his spirited enterprize upon a county Clare property, he fitted out and filled with arms a vessel which he brought to Cadiz. He accepted a commission from the Cortes, and distinguished himself by his valour in several engagements against the French, who had invaded the country as the allies of a despotic monarch, in order to perpetuate the bondage of the Spanish people.

When the struggle against despotism proved vain, Steele quitted Spain and returned to Ire-

land. He constantly attended the meetings of the Catholic Association, and watched with anxious scrutiny the words and actions of O'Connell. So soon as his judgment convinced him that O'Connell was a trustworthy leader, he immediately proclaimed his adhesion to the cause, and worked with zeal to remove those disabilities from the Catholics which he, as a Protestant, felt were disgraceful only to the party by whom they were inflicted.

Notwithstanding the military bent of Steele's ideas, and the constitutional bravery of the man, he highly appreciated the value of O'Connell's moral-force system of political warfare. Seeing clearly that the wild and illegal combinations of Whitefeet, Ribbonmen, Terry Alts, and other misguided parties assuming equally fantastic and absurd denominations, could only tend to embarrass the friends and injure the cause of rational liberty, he applied himself to the task of quelling disturbances in his native county, and of getting up arms from the misguided peasantry.

There was in this occupation something peculiarly congenial to the wild and Ossianic spirit of Steele. He loved at night to traverse the mountain fastnesses of Cratloe; to watch the dark low clouds slowly sailing over the heavens as he

wandered through the lonely ravine by the side of the swollen brook, in whose midnight wave stars shimmered as they broke through the mists. These scenes had for Steele a charm of magical potency, especially when associated with the function of Head Pacifier which he discharged in the midst of them. His soul thrilled with an indefinable feeling, of which fancy, poetry, and patriotism were constituent parts, as he paused to hold communings with Nature in her sombre moods—to listen to the voice of the night-wind as it swept through the gloomy woods, and to catch the inspiration of the hills in his solemn, thoughtful and imaginative, yet energetic career. He spent many a night in the cottages of the insurgent peasantry, endeavouring to reclaim them from their driftless and mischievous conspiracies. In some of these nocturnal excursions, O'Connell accompanied Steele. They got up a large quantity of arms. Steele, by constant and familiar association with his peasant-countrymen convinced himself that their crimes were principally, if not wholly, the fruits of oppression; whilst he proudly recognized the traits of high and virtuous feeling which often appeared in their conduct. One instance of self-devoted heroism in five poor Terry Alts he has often recorded.

There was a Mr. Smith who resided at Fort Fergus, and who, during the period when robberies of arms were frequent, habitually boasted that his house was so well defended that no insurgents would dare to enter it. Accordingly, the neighbouring gentry having confidence in Smith's superior valour, entrusted the greater part of their arms to his keeping. It so chanced, however, that five Terry Alts availed themselves one day of Smith's absence from home; entered the house, and carried off all the arms, notwithstanding that a party of constables had been left at Fort Fergus to guard them. There was a man prosecuted for the outrage on the evidence of the constables, whose sworn testimony was so contradictory that in any ordinary case the acquittal of the accused would have been certain. He was however tried by a "special commission;" and at special commissions jurymen have immemorially deemed it their duty to hang as many men as possible. The prisoner was accordingly found guilty.

On receiving the news of this verdict, the five Terry Alts who had really taken the arms, came to Steele, and said that if the innocent man who had been falsely convicted could thereby be saved, they would surrender the arms. They added that if his life could be obtained on no other terms than

those of their dying in his place, they would all go to Ennis and give themselves up to the gaoler ! There was, however, no occasion for this sacrifice, as the condemned man was saved on a strong application in his favour to the Government.

In 1828 the Catholics resolved on opposing every member of the Peel-Wellington administration, whether personally hostile or friendly to their claims. That administration pretended to make the Catholic question an "open" one ; at the same time contriving that all substantial power should be placed in the hands of those who opposed it. To end this delusion, it was determined by the Catholics to start a candidate for Clare in opposition to Mr. Vesey Fitzgerald, who had been nominated President of the Board of Trade by the Prime Minister. O'Connell conceived the idea of standing for the county. An unemancipated Catholic, chosen by the electors as their representative, yet disqualified by the existing laws from taking his seat, would present a striking impersonation of the Catholic grievances. O'Gorman Mahon proposed, and Thomas Steele seconded the nomination of O'Connell. The influence of this dexterous movement of the Agitator in accelerating emancipation is now matter of history. O'Connell presented himself at the table of the House of Commons to take

his seat, but could not overleap the barrier of the Protestant oaths. Emancipation was hastily passed in the Spring of 1829, and seldom has paltry and contemptible personal enmity been more conspicuous than in the conduct of Sir Robert Peel, who, in admitting the Catholics to parliament, yet excluded O'Connell as having been unduly elected! Peel was unable to forgive O'Connell for having compelled him to emancipate. The exclusion was totally inoperative for any political object ; it was solely a personal insult, for O'Connell—as every one necessarily anticipated—was immediately re-elected by his former constituents.

Steele is an enthusiast ; and, like all enthusiasts, it is his fate to incur the censure of those who are totally incapable of appreciating, or even of comprehending, the intense fidelity to Ireland which actuates the man. The real truth is, that the very faults of Steele are merely the exaggeration of high and noble qualities. If (in the opinion of some persons) he partakes of the extravagance of Don Quixote, he also partakes of the Don's contempt for all baseness, perfidy, and cowardice. It is true that in Steele's language there is a strong and marked peculiarity ; an occasional application of strong phrases to comparatively insignificant objects ; a blending of

the ideal and poetic in undue proportions with the real and practical; a disposition to seek illustrations of his views from sources too recondite for ordinary comprehension. But what of all that? The man loves Ireland, and would die for her with more pleasure than even the selfish place-hunter who jeers at his verbal eccentricities could derive from personal aggrandizement. The people of Ireland give Steele full credit for his pure and single-hearted patriotism; and shame to them if they did not recognize and duly honour the qualities of unsullied honesty and enthusiastic love of freedom which pre-eminently distinguish him!

If we smile at the poetic temperament of the orator who could harangue the frieze-coated peasantry of Connaught about the Scandinavian EDDA, and deduce from Icelandic mythology, for the edification of the Connemara rustics, comparisons between O'Connell's policy and the antagonist influences of the HRYMPFHUR and the MUSPELTHUR; if these illustrations evoke a passing smile, it is on the other hand perfectly impossible to deny that Steele has a vivid perception of all that is grand and beautiful in external nature, and that he can pourtray his impressions with force, and grace, and delicacy. Take, for example, the following descriptive pas-

sages from a pamphlet published by Steele in 1828;*

"I passed late (it might have been about an hour after midnight) along the Shannon side; it was dark, and dreary, and stormy, in squally gusts, and frequent showers of heavy rain: the moon sometimes, but very rarely, and without showing her form, lighted the clouds with a pallid watery light; but so pale, and faint, and transitory, as in general to be perceptible for little more than a few moments between its apparition and evanishment. The night-wind sometimes sighed softly and mournfully on high, around the topmasts and lifts of the topsail yards of a ship near the wharf; and sometimes the 'winde that whistleth and cryeth like doleful ghosts' did whistle and cry over the distant strand; and sometimes, at irregular and capricious intervals, when the strong squalls and gusts rushed from the mountains, it moaned and howled through the round tops, and blocks, and condensed cordage of the shrouds. The solitude was dismal, for no one but myself was abroad by the river side. The Shannon had been swoln to a torrent by the incessant rains of the season, and

" Practical Suggestions on the Navigation of the River Shannon," &c. by Thomas Steele, Esq.—London, 1828.

the white foam on a part of it faintly appeared through the darkness. The wild and dreary shrieks of some sea-gulls, or other water birds, which I could not see, were the only sounds of animated nature that smote upon my ear in that midnight desolation. The darkness deepened almost to blackness ; the rain came on and fell with violence and plashed and pattered upon the pavement near the wharf where I was standing ; and the sound of the rain, and the howling wind, and the roaring of the wide and rapid flood over its rocky bed, and the dreary shrieks of the sea birds heard through the darkness, were sounds, at that hour, of solemn, deep, and mystic wildness. The whole scene, and the hour, were in accordance with the spirit of the time—mysterious, ghastly, wild ! When I got home, I wrote a description of it ; and I said to myself while I was writing it, ‘Tis a night to remember Limerick in its history !” (pp. 84, 85.)

Steele is a sort of political Ossian. The drifting shower, the mountain-mist, the sunbeam sparkling in the brook, the howling tempest, are all duly noted and used to illustrate exhortations to popular energy and perseverance.

The next specimen of his descriptive powers is of a less gloomy character ;

"There is a spot upon a mountain promontory in Fingal, where, in my early boyhood, external nature first burst upon my vision in beauty and sublimity, not separated, but in combination. Upon the eastern side of the solitary mountain where it shelves abruptly into the sea, and so near its summit that there was a glorious expanse of horizon, was a little fountain, bursting among the rocks, and wild flowers, and sunbeams. A bee hummed over the flowers, close to the fountain and its little rill; some sea-gulls wheeled and floated in the air, high above the sea that broke upon the shore; and there was a bark with white sails, holding on her course upon the swelling tide. Whenever I call this scene to remembrance, 'pure, bright, elysian,' it floats in my imagination like a vision of enchantment. This is the pure elysian enchantment of external nature, without any intermixture of feelings inspired by the history of the times of old. 'Canst thou loosen the bonds of Orion, or canst thou bind the sweet influences of the Pleiades?' No; and there are other sweet influences too, that while man retains his nature, never can be bound——

• • • • • there is given,
Unto the things of earth that time hath bent,
A spirit's feeling • • • • •
• • • • • There is a power,
And magic in the ruined battlement;'

And when I stand in the ancient cathedral of Limerick, and listen to the choir and the organ ; when I hear the chaunt of the High Mass, the ringing of the mass-bell, and view the incense ascending from the altar in one of their convent chapels ; when I wander through the gardens of the holy sisterhood of St. Clare and view their figures gliding among the Gothic ruins ; or when I stand within the sanctuary of their convent chapel ; when I sit upon the ancient bastion in St. Munchin's cemetery upon a gloomy evening, and listen to the sullen sough of the wind among the dark elms over my head, and the rushing flood of the Shannon that sweeps at its basement, and hear the roar of the bugles, the beat of the drum, and the voice of the trumpet within the court of the castle, I become inspired by a feeling, solemn and mournful, different from that of which I am susceptible in any other place in the world ; but not very unlike that with which, upon the shore of the solitary lake where he reposes, I hear the wind whisper at night in the grass around the grave of my father, whom I have never seen." (pp. 125, 122.)

How wild, how mystic, how impressive !

Steele's personal devotion to O'Connell is proverbial. Although a Protestant himself, he fitted up an apartment in his house in the county Clare

as a chapel to be used for the celebration of mass whenever he should be visited by his “mighty leader,” as he delights to call O’Connell. He combined with this tribute to his political chief, his own devotion to Celtic antiquity; for the altar of the domestic chapel was a large, rude block of stone, which for ages had remained in the woods, grey, moss-grown, and solitary; and which was averred by a somewhat vague tradition to have been used in pagan times for Druidical rites, and subsequently for the celebration of the Roman Catholic worship in the days of penal persecution.

Steele’s declaration has been often quoted, “that if O’Connell desired him to sit upon a mine about to be sprung, he would implicitly obey the mandate.” This, which from other lips would be hypocritical exaggeration, is with Tom Steele the strict, literal truth. Those who best know him, best can testify the implicit nature of his faith in O’Connell’s integrity and wisdom. He deems his incarceration as a fellow-“conspirator” with O’Connell, the proudest honour of his life.

The characteristics of Steele are easily summed up. Brave as a lion, thoroughly honest and straightforward, intensely devoted to his country, utterly incapable of thought or deed unbecoming

a high-souled and chivalrous gentleman ; he combines these qualities with a certain exuberant poetry of idea and of language, peculiarly obnoxious to the criticism of the prosaic multitude.

His figure is tall and well proportioned, and carries much of a martial appearance, to which his undress blue military cap and frock coat not a little contribute. His face is bronzed by the suns of six-and-fifty summers, and the expression of his countenance is that of resolute determination. His reception on entering an assembly of Irish Repeaters is always enthusiastic ; for his countrymen know his worth and are grateful for his uniform and consistent advocacy of their rights. May he live long to enjoy the triumph of the noble cause to which he has devoted himself.*

* Mr. Steele, in his character of Head Pacifier, has recently rendered the most essential service to the community in tranquillizing the disturbed districts of North Tipperary. Those who regard the Irish movement from a distance, have no conception of the moral authority wielded by this single-hearted Irishman, when he presents himself as O'Connell's ambassador to the turbulent inhabitants of districts which local oppression has irritated into the commission of criminal acts; and, aided by the Catholic clergy, enjoins peace as the behest of Ireland's "mighty leader." In truth, the impressive singularity of his language would appear, on such occasions, to add force to the character assigned to him in the movement, by stamping on him an individuality peculiarly germane to the excessive *earnestness* of purpose which forms one of his most prominent characteristics.

CHAPTER XXIV.

"In reality, the central system is nearly allied to despotism as the local is to liberty, but so far as they can be distinguished, they lend a mutual assistance. As centralization leads to despotism, so despotism to centralization; and as love of the soil prompts to self-government, so self-government to love of the soil."—*Ramsay's Political Discourses*, p. 343.—*Edinburgh*, 1838.

"Ireland is far too important in itself, and too different in many respects from Great Britain, to allow of its being ruled entirely by the Imperial Parliament. The craving for self-government has become so strong that it cannot be neglected."—*Ibid.* p. 325.

Let us examine, now, what are the merits of the enterprise in which the Irish people are engaged.

They seek to rescind a statute which was passed *against* the consent of the whole nation—Orange-men and all—and of which the operation *was to* extinguish their resident Parliament.

From the earliest period of the connexion of the islands under Henry the Second, the King's Irish subjects enjoyed a Parliament in Ireland, distinct from, and perfectly independent of, the Parliament of England. Some efforts on the part of England to usurp jurisdiction over the Irish subjects in the reign of King Henry the Sixth,

elicited from the Irish Parliament in the 38th year of that monarch's reign, a full and unequivocal declaration of its own independence. That Parliament declared "that Ireland is, and always has been, incorporated within itself by ancient laws and customs, and is only to be governed by such laws as by the Lords and Commons of the land in Parliament assembled have been advised, accepted, affirmed and proclaimed ; that by custom, privilege and franchise, there has ever been a royal seal peculiar to Ireland, to which alone the subjects are to pay obedience ; that this realm hath also its constable and marshal, before whom all appeals are finally determinable ; yet, as orders have been of late issued under another seal, and the subjects summoned into England to prosecute their suits before a *foreign* jurisdiction, to the great grievance of the people, and in violation of the rights and franchises of the land ; they enact that for the future no persons shall be obliged by any commandment, under any other seal but that of Ireland, to answer any appeal, or any other matter out of said land, and that no officer to whom such commandment may come shall put the same into execution under penalty of forfeiture of goods and chattels, and one thousand marks, half to be paid to the king, and the other half to the prosecutor ; and further, that

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all appeals of treason in Ireland shall be determined before the constable and marshal of Ireland, and in no other place."*

It is impossible to express more distinctly and unequivocally Legislative Independence, than the language of the Irish Parliament, 38 Hen. VI. has expressed it. There is this great value in the statute to which I have referred; namely, that it recites and establishes the fact that our distinct independence was then no new claim, but that it had existed as of right from the earliest periods; in the words of the act, "it always had been." It is as explicit on the question of final jurisdiction as Henry Grattan or Daniel O'Connell could be.

It may be objected, 1stly, That the Irish Parliament of Henry VI. was the Parliament only of a portion of the Irish people; of that portion which was of English descent, and of those aboriginal Irish who had then combined with the English settlers. I reply, that if the Parliament of a *part* of the nation had distinct independence, it certainly did not lose that independence by extending its legislative power over the entire island. It surely did not forfeit its rights because

* See Leland, II. 42.

it enlarged its jurisdiction. It surely did not lose its privileges because it at length embraced within its sway the entire Irish nation. If its independence was distinct and undoubted when it was only the parliament of a part of the nation, that independence must have necessarily been fortified and strengthened when it rested on the basis of the entire Irish people. Should it be urged that the entire Irish people were never at any time *represented* in the Irish House of Commons, I reply that at this moment a large majority of the English people are unrepresented in the English parliament. No argument, therefore, can be drawn from that circumstance against the right of Ireland to self-legislation, which will not be equally fatal to the right of the people of England to govern themselves.

It may be objected, 2ndly, That the authority asserted by the Irish Parliament of Henry the Sixth was *de facto* set aside by Poyning's Act, and subsequently by the English Act of the 6th George I. I reply that both those acts were usurpations, and can no more be validly pleaded in bar of the right of Ireland to self-government, than any other usurpations can be pleaded in bar of the rights which they respectively invaded. We might just as well argue against the rights of the English legislature, because they were to a great

extent prostrated by Henry the Eighth, by the First James, and the First Charles ; or against the rights of the English monarchy, because they were temporarily overthrown by Cromwell. It is sometimes weakly urged against the rights of Ireland, that for centuries before the Union the Irish government was influenced and often controlled by the English and Protestant party. It might with equal force be urged against the rights of Englishmen to self-legislation, that the government of England was for centuries in the hands of the Norman aristocracy.

It has been objected, 3rdly, That however void and null the Union may originally have been, from the vitiating nature of the means whereby it was achieved, yet the Irish people have subsequently given validity and force to the measure, by their own act of sending representatives to the Imperial Parliament. I reply, that their act in so doing, does not, and cannot, give moral validity to the Union ; simply because it does not indicate free choice. True—they have sent representatives to the English Parliament—just because they had no other parliament to send them to ! Their own legislature having been suppressed by force, no alternative remained for them except to return members to the British House of Commons. Their act indicates nothing but

their reluctant and coerced adoption of a *pis aller*. They have deemed it just preferable to return members to the English Senate, than not to return them at all! But,—give them the free option of an English or an Irish parliament, and *then* if they shall prefer the former—why *then* (but not till then) shall I allow that their act in returning representatives to England gives moral validity to the Union.

It has been urged that to impeach the moral validity of the Union statute, is of necessity to impeach the legal validity of every statute passed by the united parliament. Not so. Saurin drew the distinction with accuracy : “ You may,” said he, “ make the Union binding *as a law*, but you *never can make it obligatory upon conscience*. Resistance to it will be in the abstract a duty.” The Union is binding *as a law*; as a bad and unjust law. But being thus legally binding, the statutes enacted under its authority by the united parliament are also legally binding. If, however, we should admit the corollary imputed to our doctrines by the Unionists, “ that the post-union statutes are rendered invalid by the moral invalidity of the Union,” I should turn on the Unionists and ask, Whose fault is that? Not *ours*, surely, who opposed in 1800 the enactment, and who now oppose the continuance of the Union,

the source of the statutory invalidity in question. The fault would rest with those who, by the flagitious suppression of the legislative rights of Ireland, had deprived legislation of validity, and shaken to their base the bulwarks and fences of civil society.

The Unionists, unable to deny the infamy of the means by which the Union was effected, allege, "that the means have nothing to do with the measure;" "that the measure may be good, although the means used to carry it were indefensible," and so on.

The means have a great deal to do with the measure. They demonstrate two important facts ; firstly, the hostility of the people of Ireland to the Union, which could not be achieved without such means. No measure can be *good*, which outrages every wish, sentiment, and principle of the people to whom it is applied. Secondly, the "means" used to carry the Union demonstrate that the contrivers of the measure were animated with the most deadly hostility to the Irish nation. The men who connived at torture—the men who fomented a rebellion—the men who ruthlessly sacrificed the lives of thousands, and who laboured with incredible activity and energy to corrupt the senate ; were such men our friends ? Were they men from whose hands a *good* mea-

sure could by possibility emanate ? The means they used afford a superabundant demonstration of their animus—an animus totally incompatible with friendly intentions to Ireland. The Union was the measure of our enemies, not of our friends. There is in this fact *prima facie* evidence that the measure could not have been either intended or calculated to benefit Ireland.

The Union, then, being a gross outrage on Ireland's legislative rights—rights of as ancient existence as the corresponding rights of England ; being, moreover, the work of our deadliest enemies ; being achieved in defiance of our national will, and by means which it is no exaggeration to term diabolical ; this union is now actively opposed by the people of Ireland, who allege that its results on their social condition have been fully as disastrous as might have been expected from the nature of its origin and the character of its authors.

They allege that the imperial parliament taxes Ireland more heavily than the native legislature did, and that the surplus revenue, instead of being expended in Ireland, is exported to London.

They allege that the absentee drain, chiefly consequent upon the Union, amounts to about four millions annually.

They allege that the manufactures of Ireland, once the source of comfortable subsistence to numbers of her people, have been prostrated by the overwhelming competition of great English capitalists, who drove the Irish manufacturer out of his native market when the protective influence of a native legislature was removed.

They allege that the progress of popular liberties under their own parliament was rapid, until checked by the vigorous interference of England; and that, had the Irish legislature continued, the anti-national church establishment would have long since ceased to insult and oppress the Irish people.

They allege that the very fact of being governed by laws made in another country has degraded the minds of the Irish aristocracy and gentry. Use has familiarized them with national servitude; and the consequent depravation of their sentiments operates most perniciously on the interests of their country. They have lost that pride of national honour which is the best protector of a nation's prosperity.

Again, the Repealers allege that Ireland has been treated with foul dishonesty as regards the national debt. Our complaint upon this head, as put forth by the Liberator in his speech on the motion for Repeal in 1834, and by Mr.

Staunton in many successive publications, may be thus summed up :

At the time of the Union, England owed four hundred and forty-six millions sterling. Ireland owed *only* twenty-three millions, and of this debt probably three-fourths had been incurred by the military preparations for carrying the Union.* The annual interest of the British debt then amounted to £17,700,000; whilst the annual interest of *our* debt only amounted to £1,200,000. The excess of annual liability on the part of Great Britain was therefore £16,500,000. In common honesty Great Britain should have paid every penny of this annual excess, by taxes raised exclusively within her own shores. But common honesty—or any sort of honesty—had little to do with the Union. The *exclusive* taxation of Great Britain, which *ought* to be sixteen and a half, is not quite thirteen millions.† There is thus left an annual charge of three millions and a half of British ante-Union debt, to which Ireland, by a flagrant breach of honesty, is called on to contribute a portion of payment.

* In 1796 the Irish debt was only £5,500,000.

† At the present time it is true that the exclusive taxation of England is augmented by the Income Tax. But this impost is declared to be temporary. From 1814 until lately there was no such tax as this. On the subject of international finance, John O'Connell's elaborate "ARGUMENT FOR IRELAND" may be consulted with advantage.

The Repealers furthermore allege, that the existence of a domestic parliament in Ireland, enjoying even the partial freedom secured in 1782, produced an increase of national prosperity unexceeded within the same period by any other nation upon earth, despite the counteractive tendency of English influence and administrative corruption. In proof of this important fact, we have the evidence of two grand promoters of the Union, namely, William Pitt and Lord Clare. Pitt, in 1799, alleged, in a speech on the Union, that the balance of trade between Ireland and England was then enormously in favour of Ireland.

"The trade," said he, "at this time [1799], is infinitely more advantageous to Ireland [than in 1785]. It will be proved from the documents I hold in my hand, as far as relates to the mere interchange of manufactures, that the manufactures exported to Ireland from Great Britain in 1797, very little exceeded one million sterling, (the articles of produce amount to nearly the same sum,) whilst Great Britain on the other hand imported from Ireland to the amount of more than three millions in the manufacture of linen and linen-yarn, and between two and three millions in provisions and cattle, besides corn and other articles of produce."

Let us notice here in passing, that the export of provisions in 1797 was not, as now, a *starving* export. It was an export of the surplus produce which remained after the producers had first been comfortably fed at home.*

Lord Clare, in 1798, bore the following remarkable testimony to Irish improvement under the constitution of 1782 : “There is not,” said he, “a nation on the face of the habitable globe which has advanced in cultivation, in agriculture, in manufactures, with the same rapidity, in the same period, as Ireland.”

This evidence from the grand contriver of the Union, and his Irish ally, Clare, is surely conclusive. It is the admission of enemies, and is

* Mr. Wiggins, in his “Monaster Misery of Ireland,” deplores the manifest deterioration of Ireland from 1776 to 1844. He says—“Let any one read Arthur Young’s Tour in Ireland, about 1776, and let him now look for the numerous mansions, parks, farming establishments, and improvements, which *he* then visited and recorded. Most of the mansions will be found deserted, shut up, or the roofs fallen in; the parks let out in dairy pastures and ‘score-land;’ the farming abandoned to tenants at rack rent, and the improvements resolved again into their original state of bog, and partly cut for turbary.” In 1837 we are told by Commissioner Binns, that “by comparing the account given in 1776 by Arthur Young, with the facts elicited in the course of this examination, it will be evident that *the condition of the lower Irish instead of being improved, is considerably deteriorated* since his valuable book was written.”

So much for the “giant-stride prosperity” alleged by the unionists!

fully as distinct as the following testimony given by Plunket in his struggle for the preservation of the Irish parliament in 1799 :

“ The revenues, the trade, the manufactures of Ireland, are thriving beyond the hope or the example of any other country of her extent; within these few years advancing with a rapidity astonishing even to herself.”

National prosperity under a native parliament, even in spite of the vast drawbacks of penal laws and a rotten borough system: national decay under a union, despite the removal of penal restrictions: the people of Ireland see and feel the miserable contrast, and demand the restoration of their native legislature.

On the other hand the unionists allege, that the dissolution of the Union would infallibly be followed by our total separation from Great Britain. They omit, however, all notice of the tendency of the Union itself to produce separation by disgusting the Irish people against a connexion whereby they are degraded and impoverished. I admit the advantage to Ireland of connexion with Great Britain; connexion under the same crown and with separate parliaments. But if I deem—as I *do* deem—such a connexion greatly preferable to separation, I also deem separation greatly preferable to the Union. Con-

nexion is a very good thing ; but like most other good things it may be purchased at too high a price ; and undeniably the destruction of our parliament is too high a price to pay for British connexion.

A connexion satisfactory to Ireland would be far more likely to endure than one which operates as a perpetual source of irritation and ill-will. Norway and Sweden afford a happy example of two friendly nations united under the same crown, and each enjoying its own domestic parliament. We hear a vast quantity of grave and solemn nonsense about two co-ordinate parliaments necessarily clashing against each other, and destroying the integrity of the empire. The problem is practically solved in Sweden and Norway. The collisions of the nations were a much more probable event, if the one aroused the deadly hatred of the other by destroying her power of self-legislation.

Separation has no terrors for an Irishman who looks around, and sees seventeen European states all inferior to Ireland in size, population, position, and general resources—yet able to maintain their own independent existence. Is not Ireland as well qualified for separate independence as Hanover ? Ireland, with her population of eight millions and a half, as Hanover with her population of *one* million and a half ?

The Unionists allege that the Union, by centralizing the legislative power, consolidates and strengthens the empire. Centralization, up to a certain point, is indispensable for imperial integrity und safety. But when it passes that point it becomes despotism ; and despotism resembles the brazen statue with the feet of clay. Its strength is corroded, its foundations are undermined, by the just dissatisfaction of those portions of the empire that are the victims of its monopoly of power, of expenditure, and of influence. There is no permanent political health in that state whose extremities are oppressed and despoiled to augment the strength and enhance the grandeur of the centre. Such a political condition is analogous to the state of a human body affected with an overflow of blood at the head or heart, which every man knows is a state of disease not unfrequently followed by death.

Centralization, in the shape of the Legislative Union, is the source, not of strength, but of weakness—weakness arising from alienated hearts and trampled interests. Local self-government in the several nations which go to constitute an empire, affords the best security to the whole against foreign aggression ; a security derived from the greater zeal each portion of the empire

must necessarily have in defending those local institutions which are dear to each man's heart, and entwine themselves around his best affections. On the other hand, centralization, by rendering the inhabitants of the parts at a distance from the centre dissatisfied and discontented, necessarily weakens the outposts of the empire, and thereby renders the provinces vulnerable to the foreign invader. Men will fight better in defence of happy homes than they will in defence of hearths despoiled by the centralizing tyranny. Men will fight better in defence of their liberties than they will in defence of their own bondage; they will struggle with a bolder heart and a more stalwart arm in defence of free local institutions, prolific of blessings and redolent of nationality, than in support of a system which strikes down their natural rights and brands them with national inferiority.

The result of the Union on the conduct of Irishmen in the event of foreign war, is worth calculating.

Sir Robert Peel, alluding to the possible occurrence of war, thus expressed himself in the House of Commons, in the August of this present 1844 :

" I must say," quoth the premier, " that no man laments more than I do the existence of those jealousies in Ireland, and of those unfortu-

nate dissensions that have prevailed, tending, as no doubt they do, to weaken the strength of this country. But although these things have prevailed, I am not the less confident that in case—but I trust there will be no necessity for such an appeal—but in case *the honour or interest of this country (England) should require that such an appeal should be made*, I have no doubt that the people of Ireland would, with the people of Great Britain, cordially and zealously support the sovereign in the maintainance of her throne and the honour and interests of her empire."

No doubt Ireland is under many obligations to take care of the "honour and interests" of England—England, who has cherished with such assiduous affection the honour and interests of Ireland! The queen's name is skilfully thrown in as a bait. It was needless. Irishmen are loyal, and will never take up arms *against* their sovereign. The premier also talks of "the honour and interests of the empire." Our share in these is rather problematical, and might be illustrated by the fabled alliance between the giant and the dwarf, in which the dwarf got all the knocks and the giant all the glory.

No. If England were menaced with destruction to-morrow, I should regard her peril as the just judgment of God upon her, for the crimes she has committed against Ireland. I should,

myself, not feel in any haste to rush to her defence. There *may* be others animated with similar sentiments. In the hour of her strength she has crushed us—despoiled us of our parliament; in the hour of her danger we should quietly allow her to fight out her battles without our assistance. “The honour and interests of the empire,” forsooth! What concern have *we*, as matters stand at present, in sustaining a power which is only used to keep us down?

Great is the fatuity of statesmen who persist in fomenting the hostile spirit of Ireland by the obstinate refusal of justice! who prefer the alienation of millions of their fellow-subjects to the warm and zealous affection which would really consolidate the strength of the empire in the day of common peril!

But the genius of Whiggery interposes with soft and soothing accents: “O good people, we will give you full justice in a British Parliament! Every British privilege shall be yours; *full equality* of rights and franchises! anything, everything, except an Irish Parliament in College-green.”

Aye—everything is *promised*, save that which alone is worth any serious struggle; I say *promised*; for the intention to perform is far more than doubtful.

But were that intention as sincere and honest as I believe it to be otherwise ; were Whigs triumphant in both houses, with their hands full of boons, ready to shower upon Ireland ; still the political equality of Ireland with England under an incorporating Union, is thoroughly and totally impossible. It is out of the nature of things. In any distribution of members, England must always have a numerical superiority in a united legislature, capable of defeating the legislative influence of the whole body of Irish members in questions affecting their own country. This single circumstance must necessarily render a legislative union of *equality*, impossible. For many years a majority of Irish members uniformly supported emancipation ; and that measure was as uniformly rejected by the English House of Commons. What “equality” was there in that ? The Coercion Act of 1833 was passed by an English Parliament in defiance of a majority of Irish members. What “equality” was there in that ? Again : it is ridiculous to expect that so long as the Union lasts, England will not always continue the residence of the Legislature. That also debars a union of equality. The seat of the Parliament is the centre of power ; and will, necessarily, attract the Irish absentees to London. Your “equality” would still leave

Ireland afflicted with an absentee drain of £4,000,000 per annum. So long as the Union lasts, so long will England hold the purse strings of the Irish nation. What equality is there in that? "Equal rights with England" truly, under a Union! The thing, I repeat, is totally impossible. Common sense laughs to scorn the flimsy delusion.

Oh, but then there is to be a fusion of England and Ireland into one nation; just as Sussex and Kent are politically identified. This, again, is impossible. A nation, as Burke says, is not merely a geographical arrangement; it is a moral essence. The pregnant experience of the past and of the present—the experience of seven eventful centuries—demonstrates the total impracticability of fusing together the moral essences of England and Ireland. Kent and Sussex may amalgamate; Ireland is too great to be dealt with on provincial rules.

As to the Whig notion that any conceivable political ameliorations could make the Union durable, I have already remarked in the present work* that even if every Whig nostrum for Ireland were converted into positive law by the

* See p. 254, *ante*.

Imperial Parliament, still, so long as England withheld from us our legislature, we should be deprived of that which would be worth all the rest put together. Name as many good laws as you please ; they are surely as attainable from an *Irish* Parliament as from an *Imperial* one ; so that, whilst upon the one hand Imperial legislation can give us at best no advantage over home-government, on the other hand home-government possesses over Imperial the inestimable advantages of home expenditure, home sympathies ; the sole control of our national resources and revenues ; the exclusion of foreign hands from Irish coffers ; and the residence instead of the absentee-ship of the great Irish proprietors as well as of the legislature. Imperial legislation, even under the most favouring circumstances, would still leave us under the withering influences of absenteeism, of a tax-drain, and of the anglicised, un-Irish affections and prejudices of our aristocracy ; whilst it would not give us one solitary good law that could not be far more readily procured from an Irish Parliament.

I shall now examine some common objections to the Repeal ; availing myself of the language of the very amusing and clever, but somewhat superficial author of “ Ireland and its Rulers since 1829.”

"England," says this writer, "would (in the event of Repeal) cease to be a great substantive power, and Europe would be left at the mercy of Russia, France, Austria, and Prussia."

In the name of common sense, we ask—*Why?* What is there in Repeal to diminish the power of England? The Union at this moment fills the minds of the Irish people with rancorous jealousy of England. Does the rancorous jealousy of one-third of the Queen's European subjects conduce to the stability of England's power? Is English power necessarily built on the depression of the Irish nation? Is the *strength* of the empire dependant on the *weakness* of one-third part of it? On the contrary, the national sense of gross and grievous wrong inflicted by England upon Ireland in the demolition of her legislature, is more calculated to perpetuate international animosity and thereby produce imperial weakness, than a system in which two free Parliaments should provide for the respective wants of the two islands. "A house divided against itself shall not stand;" and the Union promotes and foments the perilous division of the household. An intelligent peasant lately said to me with true Celtic emphasis—"I don't care, sir, who it is that England fights against; if it was the Turks themselves, I wish they'd beat her!"

Such is the feeling of myriads of the population ; a feeling which has its source in the sense of enormous national injury inflicted upon Ireland by the Union. Can such a Union contribute to imperial power ?

The ingenious writer I have quoted, continues as follows :

“ The Irish Repealers may object that such a consummation ” [namely, the decrease of England’s European influence] “ should have happened in the last century previous to the Union if it were likely to take place again upon its supposed dissolution. But to this and all similar arguments of the Repeal party, it is a sufficient political answer to reply, that Ireland had never a free parliament till 1782 ; that within eighteen years the connexion was three times all but dissolved ; viz., by Flood’s convention for ultra-reform ; by the difference upon the Regency Question in 1789 ; and by the rebellion in 1798 ; that Fox and Burke, while yielding to an Irish army, led by an Irish aristocracy, considered that Grattan’s revolution was most calamitous to England ; and that Pitt, in the very outset of his parliamentary life resolved on the measure of a Union, and the extinction of the Irish parliament, from his sagacious foresight of the probable results of two legislatures in one empire.”

"Ireland had never a free parliament until 1782." This assertion is unfounded. We have already seen the Irish parliament of 1460 affirming not only its own independence on England, but that of all previous parliaments from the days of Henry the Second. In another sense, however, the writer is correct: that is, if he means to imply that the imperfect construction of the unreformed Irish House of Commons left it open to corrupt ~~Gourt~~ influence. In *this* sense it is true that even the Irish parliament of 1782 was not free enough; that it was not based on a representation sufficiently extensive; that too large a portion of the lower house represented —*not* the people—but the titled patrons of boroughs. "Oh!" it may be said, "the parliament was only the more easily *managed* on that account." Maybe so; but that species of "*management*," like all other international dishonesty, was *eminently calculated* to defeat its own object; and instead of binding the two countries together in the solid, lasting bonds of full, free justice and fair play, it tended to exacerbate the victimized nation and to create a store of rankling hatred fraught with eventual danger to the empire. The Repealers allege that real safety and international amity can alone co-exist with a truly free and popular Irish legislature; one

which will do justice to the Irish people, and be placed beyond the reach of all corrupt "management."

Let me here parenthetically notice a fallacy very commonly put forward by Unionists. They say, "As long as you had a parliament, its utility was obstructed and its members were corrupted by English influence. Therefore a Union was indispensable to correct the evils resulting from such a state of things."

It is perfectly true that the unreformed Irish parliament was exposed to pernicious English influence. The rational and natural course would have been to get rid of that influence instead of getting rid of the Parliament. But what is the remedy of the sagacious Unionists? Why, truly, to increase the disease! That disease, they themselves allege, was the English influence then partially operating through channels of parliamentary corruption. What is their cure? To render that same mischievous influence dominant, paramount! To render it perpetual and resistless! It was, they say, pernicious, even when counteracted by the occasional virtue or the national interests of an Irish legislature. And yet they would have us believe that it becomes innocuous when that counteractive power is extinct, and when no check exists to its detrimental operation!

I come back to the ingenious writer of "Ireland and its Rulers."

He blunders in his assertion that within eighteen years from 1782 the connexion of the countries was three times all but dissolved. Flood's fellow-conventionists were totally incompetent to effect separation from England, even had they desired it. And a very small minority of them* *did* desire it. In truth the parliamentary reform for which they struggled, would, if successful, have satisfied their utmost aspirations.

As to the difference upon the Regency question in 1789, the party who supported the popular view in the house, were as warmly attached to British connexion as was their leader, Grattan. The danger arising from a possible difference in choosing the Regent, might have been easily provided against by a specific enactment.† A bill to that effect was actually brought into the Irish Parliament by the Right Honourable James Fitzgerald; and—cushioned by the Government!

It requires great hardihood to ascribe the rebellion of 1798 to the existence of a resident Parliament in Ireland. I have, in the earlier

* Including, however, Mr. Flood himself.

† See the Appendix, for an examination of the arguments drawn from the Regency question.

portion of this work, exhibited a few of the provocations employed by the authorities to "make it explode." The convulsive throes of revolutionary France then agitated Europe. Wild spirits—chiefly Protestant—amongst the Irish middle classes, first caught the contagion of French principles, and preached up rebellion in their secret conclaves. They unfortunately found in the hearts of the Irish peasantry a soil well prepared to receive the seed they scattered. England had prepared the soil for the reception of that seed. English misgovernment had taught the Irish of that day to seize on any project that promised deliverance from their tyrants.

The writer next asserts that

"The character of England would be ruined by consenting to such a measure [as the Repeal]. Her reputation for sagacity and political ability would be destroyed—her fame would vanish."

It may be asked how her character and fame would suffer by the mere performance of an act of justice; which act would remove a dangerous present source of weakness from the empire?

He continues—

"Her material interests would share the same ruin as her moral power. As in individuals, so in nations, character is the creator of national wealth and rank in the social scale."

Undoubtedly. But again, the author does not show how England's character would be compromised by simply undoing a foul national wrong. He goes on—

“It (the Repeal) would rob England of a large home-market for her manufactures; for of course an Irish parliament would adopt the political economy of the national school, and pass a tariff hostile to English manufactures. In so doing, it would not merely cut off from England a large portion of her home trade; but it would also set up a rival trader at her very side.”

Now, one would suppose that all this implied with tolerable distinctness that the Union operated to extinguish Irish manufactures and to throw the monopoly of the Irish market into the hands of British manufacturers; and thus, by inevitable consequence, to create violent hostility to England in the breasts of those who felt they were sacrificed to overwhelming English competition. The writer, however, startles us with the discovery that it is not in any such causes that hostility lurks, but in the Repeal!—the Repeal, which, he proceeds to say,

“Would be creating a *hostile* country whose emigrants swarm in the British colonies; all of whom would be ready to act in concert with the Irish rulers at College-green.”

Let him look at the contributions poured into the Repeal fund by Irish emigrants at present in America and the colonies ; let him read the language of hostility to English injustice with which their communications overflow ; and let him ask himself from which of two causes would Irish "hostility" to England more probably proceed—from the jealousy that crushed a legislature, and monopolizes the Irish manufacture market ; or the frank and honourable, although tardy justice, that would restore the parliament, and adopt as its motto, "*suum cuique?*"

In truth, there is no fallacy more common among unionists than to predict, as prospective evils to result from the Repeal, the very hostility and jealousy existing at the present moment, and of which the Union itself is the real cause !

The writer I have quoted next alleges, as a result of Repeal, that

"The difficulty of maintaining a large standing army would be increased considerably. Even if Irish soldiers enlisted in the English ranks, upon any collision with Ireland they would probably desert, and start up against the 'Saxons.' The loyalty of a large portion of the army would be doubtful, and the vast Indian empire, and the colonies, would probably be left exposed for want of troops."

The author here again suggests difficulties as probably resulting from Repeal, which are a great deal more likely to result from the Union. I have already remarked, that much of the national dissatisfaction which tends to shake the allegiance of a soldiery, directly arises from the destruction of the Irish parliament. If "collision with Ireland" would make the men desert, such collision is just as likely to occur *without* Repeal as *with* it. Last year the metropolis of Ireland was placed in a state of siege, and the country was "occupied, not governed." A national resolve, or pledge, against recruiting in the English ranks, is a movement which does not need to wait for the Repeal. And even should recruits be obtained, it must be remembered they are taken from a population exasperated against England by the Union; and does our author suppose that there is any magic in a red coat to efface the long cherished principles which its wearer had imbibed from his parents, kindred, and associates?

Again—the writer fears that

"The funds would be very liberally spunged, for of course Ireland, when separate, would not consent to be held responsible for debts that she never contracted."

In the name of common honesty, why should

she? It is painful to contrast such lucubrations as these with Pitt's earnest, nay eager disclaimer in 1799 of all desire to grasp our financial resources for British purposes.

Let me now sum up:

Ireland demands the Repeal;

1. Because self-legislation is her indefeasible right. She never surrendered that right.

2. Because the denial of that right has covered the land with decay and destitution.

3. Because Ireland is truly desirous to preserve the integrity of the empire on such terms as will not victimize herself. It cannot be too often repeated that the accursed Union imperils the empire by holding out the strong lure to foreign invasion which dissatisfied Ireland furnishes. Can any man in his senses believe that if Ireland possessed a free, popular parliament, "racy of the soil," and unfolding for the benefit of Irishmen the rich natural resources of the land,—can any man believe that in such a case we should see a powerful popular journal—the undoubted representative of the sentiments of millions—speculating after the following fashion on the possible invasion of Ireland by a French armament? The *Nation* newspaper of the 31st of August first supposes a case in which all the available troops are engaged in the defence of the English coasts, and then proceeds as follows:

"If a French minister, mindful of Fontenoy and Bantry Bay, and heedful of imprisoned chiefs and a murmuring province, should send an armament to our shores, how could they be resisted? How could a disarmed and untrained peasantry, or a gentry with branded fowling-pieces, face their hot legions? Or if courage, and sudden arms, and numbers could suffice, is there no danger that a people grateful for French kindness, bitter with poverty, injustice, and hope deferred, might not raise an allied standard by the invaders, and forget law and loyalty, and their leader's commands, in the hot thirst for independence?"

Aye, truly—well might the writer ask, "is there no danger?" Foreign invasion were indeed an affliction of great magnitude. But the Union is also an affliction of colossal magnitude; an affliction so huge that it might easily render even foreign conquest a mere question in the minds of many between one species of tyranny and another. Sampson in his thirst for vengeance pulled down the house to crush his foes—rejoicing in the deed that overwhelmed *them*, even although he was himself included in their ruin. Tyranny has often merged the instinct of self-preservation in the burning desire to punish the tyrant.

But, give to the Irish people an Irish Parliament and Irish Constitution to defend, and *then* let the foe invade our shores—he will be met by the stout arms and intrepid hearts of a gallant people, fortified and inspired by the resistless, the ennobling influence of triumphant nationality. Give to the Irish that strong interest in repelling invasion which local institutions and domestic government **ALONE** can give them ; and you will find it more effectual a thousand-fold than the old stale cuckoo-cry of “throne,” and “constitution ;” a throne whose brightness never shines upon us ; a constitution whereof others nearly monopolize the enjoyment, and at which we are little more than lookers-on !

I conclude this chapter by emphatically reiterating what I have before advanced ; namely, that British connexion, with two legislatures, is preferable to separation ; but separation would be preferable to the destruction of the Irish Parliament.

There is no reason why Ireland should not flourish in a separate existence as well as Sweden, Portugal, Denmark, Holland, Belgium, or the rest of the crowd of independent European states which are all her inferiors in the qualities and resources that entitle a nation to self-government. But there is every reason why Ireland,

possessing a fertile soil, capacious estuaries, a first-rate situation for commerce, a brave and intelligent population, should find absolute and separate independence beyond all comparison preferable to a Legislative Union which cripples her powers ; absorbs her resources for the benefit of England ; and acts as a political and social blister—draining and irritating.

An Englishman may easily test the capability of the Union to attach Irishmen to British connexion, by asking himself the question whether *he* would submit to a political alliance with any land on earth, which involved the destruction of the English Parliament, or which deprived the English nation of self-government ?

It is certainly deplorable that England, with her ample means of securing our attachment by the simple justice of Repeal, should yet prefer to perpetuate our hostility by refusing us that justice. I am no blind anti-English bigot ; I can recognize the many claims of England to our admiration—would that she could enable me to add, our affection ! Two hundred and fifty years ago my own paternal ancestors were English ; and a sentiment not wholly dissimilar from filial reverence will sometimes steal over my mind when I think that for many centuries my forefathers belonged to that land, so full of glorious monu-

ments of all that can exalt and dignify the human race; rich with the memories of martial valour and pacific wisdom; famed for the splendid pre-eminence in arts and arms of her mighty sons; covered over with her stately old ancestral dwellings; adorned with majestic churches and cathedrals—the venerable records of the piety which once distinguished her inhabitants. Even an Irish Repealer may experience a momentary thrill of pride when he thinks of his remote connexion with a country possessing such claims on the world's admiration; but the sentiment is quickly banished by the wrongs that England's crimes have inflicted upon that far dearer land in which his first breath was drawn, with which his fondest affections are identified, and of which God's providence has made him a citizen!

England—England! why *will* you compel our reluctant detestation?

*Kilcascan, Co. Cork,
December, 1844.*

POSTSCRIPT.

The Repeal agitation has bid defiance to coercive measures, prosecutions, imprisonments. The next step to undermine our strength will come in the shape of concession and conciliation. Peel tries now to put a golden hook in the nose of the Irish Catholic Church by the endowment of Maynooth. As Maynooth will pocket the grant, I trust Maynooth will have the grace to laugh at the donor. There is no doubt that the grant has been most frankly and graciously made; there is as little doubt that had it been otherwise—had it professed in any way to invade the perfect freedom of Catholic instruction, it would have too palpably defeated its own object. That object is to buy off the clergy from Repeal.

There is much speculation, too, on another event—the promised visit of Her Majesty to Ireland. Hopes are expressed that the smiles of royalty may thaw the rigour of our Irish patriotism. The Queen likes travelling; she has visited Scotland, France, and Belgium. It is natural

she should wish to amuse herself with a few weeks' tour through Ireland. Let her come, and welcome! Peel will try to turn her visit to an anti-national account. But those speculators will find themselves mistaken who imagine that the Irish people are such children as to be amused with idle pageantry, or that the glittering paraphernalia of royalty can divert them for a single moment from the stern pursuit of their own independence. The motto I have chosen for this book is the echo of their settled purposes—

“ We know our duty to our Sovereign, and are loyal; we also know our duty to ourselves, and are resolved to be free.”

We are not going to forget our duty to ourselves. I trust, should crowds greet the advent of our amiable young monarch, that the air may ring again with lusty shouts for THE REPEAL! She will learn to respect a people who respect themselves.

There is, in our present position, everything to encourage, everything to stimulate to augmented energy.

Review with me, for a single moment, the progress of the present movement from the day of its commencement, the 15th of April, 1840.

1. There was a small gathering of earnest men—thinly scattered on the benches of the

Corn Exchange room—I doubt if they amounted to seventy. I bless God that *I* was one of them. The leader had convened them, I verily believe, with a conviction that the immediate answer to his call would have given a much larger attendance.

2. The leader and his little band worked on. Their work was met at first with silence by the English press, who believed that the tiny spark would soon die out if not fanned into a flame by opposition. At home our exertions were honoured with an occasional Whig sneer, or a Tory growl of hatred. The prevalent tactics of hostility, however, appeared both at home and in England, to be *neglect*.

3. The Repealers still worked on. Our numbers received some accessions. A few true hearts who could not allow the green standard to be hoisted, in storm or in sunshine, without gathering under its shadow, rallied round us. Some demonstrations—feeble as yet—in the provinces, cheered us onward, and gave earnest of better things for the future. We soon became sufficiently important to be laughed at. The London press found the silent game would no longer answer. If *it* was silent, the Association was *not*. It made itself heard, and the organs of public opinion in England amused their rea-

ders with *vapid* witticisms at our expense. The Irish Repealers were so divertingly "absurd!" "insane!" "ridiculous!" and so forth.

4. The absurd Repealers still worked on, gathering strength as they advanced. They soon passed the *laughing* ordeal, as they previously had passed the *silent* stage. Their antagonists found that silence and ridicule alike failed to check their career. Open and ferocious hostility was at length adopted; their purposes were indefatigably misrepresented; they were stigmatized as rebels and traitors; their objects were alleged to be the dismemberment of the empire; the exaltation of rampant Popery on the ruins of Protestantism, and the expulsion of the present proprietary from the forfeited estates.

5. Despite opposition, the Repealers continued their peaceful and constitutional labours. The period for domestic missions arrived in 1842; the seed was widely scattered, and speedily began to germinate.

6. A prodigious impetus was given to the movement by O'Connell's introduction of the question into the Corporation of Dublin. All the Irish municipal bodies save one, immediately identified themselves with the cause of self-government.

7. The monster meetings were held in 1843.

They demonstrated beyond all power of contradiction, that the *will* of Ireland was for Repeal. No man could thenceforth pretend that Repeal was indifferent to the Irish nation.

8. Hostility assumed a new attitude. Troops were poured into the country to put down Repeal. Had O'Connell been less wise or less wary, a horrible massacre at Clontarf—the signal for a universal and sanguinary insurrection—most certainly would have taken place. If the government had planned a massacre of the people, they could not have taken steps better calculated to effectuate that end than the steps they actually *did* take.

9. To the terrors of the soldier were super-added those of the prosecutor, judge, and Tory juror. Surely if the question were extinguishable, this enormous array of civil and military power ought now to have extinguished it!

10. Yet Repeal survived. It acquired new force beneath the hostile pressure. The Irish confederacy grew stronger every day :

11. And on the 18th of April, 1845, Sir Robert Peel, the Prime Minister of England, declares in Parliament that that confederacy—originating with a handful of men, mocked, scorned, buffeted—assailed by the soldier and the abused powers of the law—denounced from the throne,

yet sternly defying all the varied phases of hostility, and acquiring fresh vigour from every effort to suppress it—the Premier of England, after an experience of five eventful years, declares in the House of Commons THAT THAT CONFEDERACY CANNOT BE PUT DOWN BY FORCE.

He is right. Our confederacy cannot be put down by force, because it has truth for its basis, public utility for its object, and no other means for achieving its end than those which the law and constitution furnish.

What a stimulant to persevere is the Premier's admission! What a heart-cheering tribute not only to our strength, but to our morality and virtue!

Fellow-countrymen! let Peel's tribute to our strength and virtue nerve us with fresh vigour in the pursuit of our national independence. Work onward still; steadily, unflinchingly. If the sectarian bigot should vituperate you, answer his calumnies by working onward. If the place-hunting Whig sneers at your honest labours, answer his taunts by working onward. If the anti-national Tory denounces your devotion to your country, meet his enmity by still working onward. If your opponents, whether corrupt, ferocious, or fanatical, seek to deaden your energies by representing success as impossible, and

Repeal as too mighty for accomplishment, answer them by triumphantly quoting the Premier's avowal, "THE IRISH CONFEDERACY CANNOT BE PUT DOWN BY FORCE."

Go on, people of Ireland, in the noble career in which you have already made so much progress. Let ministers conciliate or coerce—let Sovereigns come or go—you, *you* have chalked out a path for yourselves in which it were infamy to falter for one instant. Your regards are steadily fixed on the one, grand, ultimate object of your hopes and your labours. Keep that object incessantly before you. Show your Sovereign that your hearts are wrapped up in its success—the hearts of eight millions of her loyal subjects. Show her that you will not compliment away the pursuit of your national rights; no, not for an hour; let the manifestation be made with perfect respect, but with manly and inflexible steadiness. Show the nations of the earth that if the unfaltering energy of national virtue entitles you to national independence, you possess and assert that claim at the moment when the servile, the sycophant, the place-hunter, and the fool, would shrink from its avowal.

Go on, people of Ireland. Work hard as you have heretofore worked. Faint not, weary not, pause not on the way, until—triumphant alike

over open hostility, and the more perilous, because insidious, enmity that masks itself in smiles and favours—you shall plant the green banner of our country, never again to be lowered, on the ramparts of the IRISH CONSTITUTION !

22d April, 1845.

A P P E N D I X.

Amongst the bugbears most frequently paraded by those who can see nothing but mischief in the Repeal of the Union, one of the most prominent is the possible difference of the two Parliaments on the question of selecting a Regent. Mr. Sharman Crawford, copying his predecessors, insisted strongly on the perils (and no man denies them) which would follow from such a diversity. The Repealers, however, propose that the cause of dissension on this point should be extinguished, by leaving the appointment of the Regent exclusively in the hands of the British Minister and Parliament. To this proposal Mr. Crawford objected in his anti-Repeal letters of 1841, that it would "*surrender the independence of the Irish Parliament on this vital point.*"

I quote the following passage from my reply to Mr. Crawford, which was published in all the Irish Repeal journals in November, 1841:

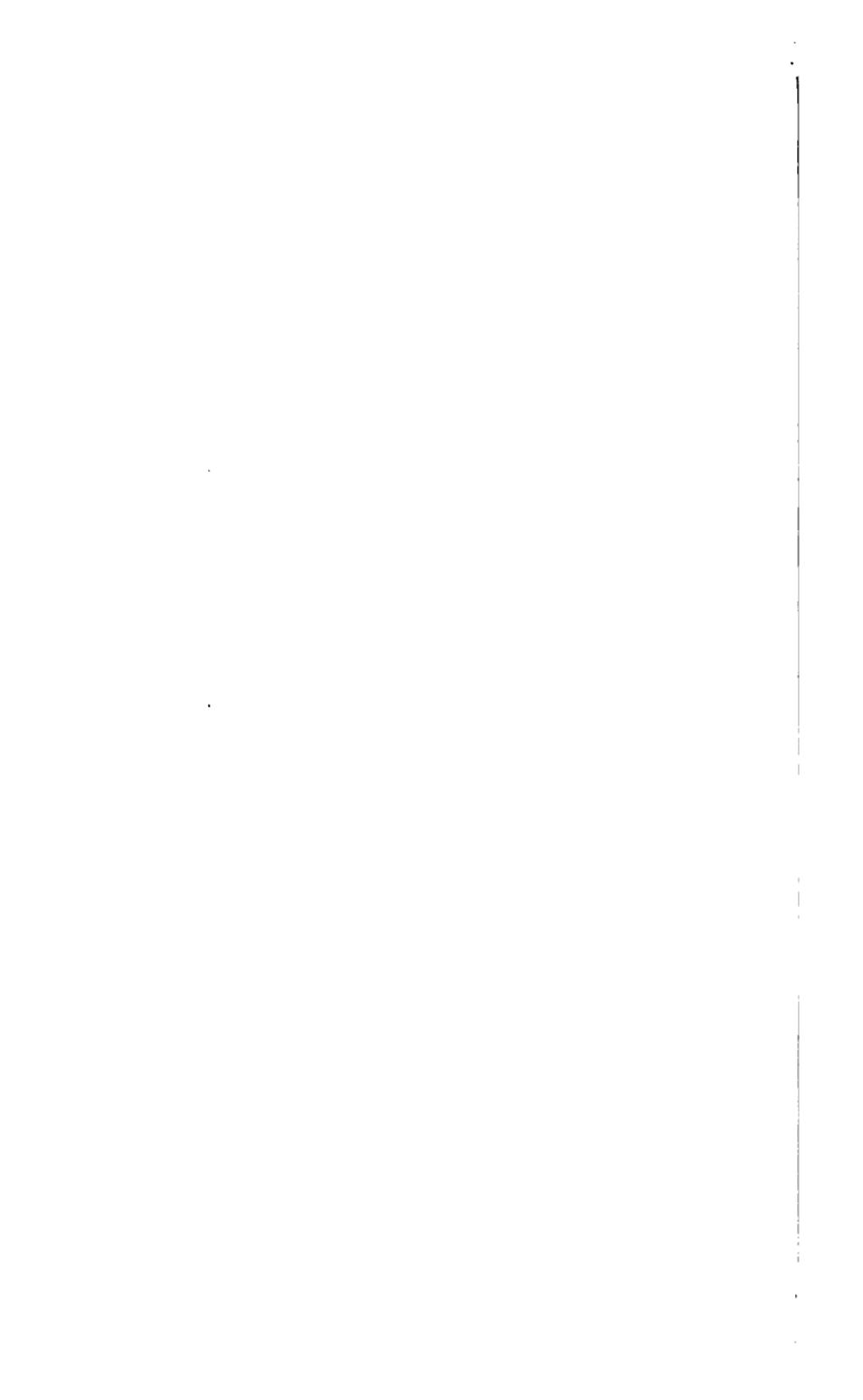
"I do not see how the independence of the Irish Parliament would be one whit more compromised by an *ipso facto* identity of the Regent, than it would be by the *ipso facto* identity of the sovereign; and I never yet heard that this latter identity was deemed incompatible with the parliamentary independence of Ireland. In fact, the identity of the Regent would seem to follow as a necessary consequence from the principle of the law that requires the identity of the Monarch.

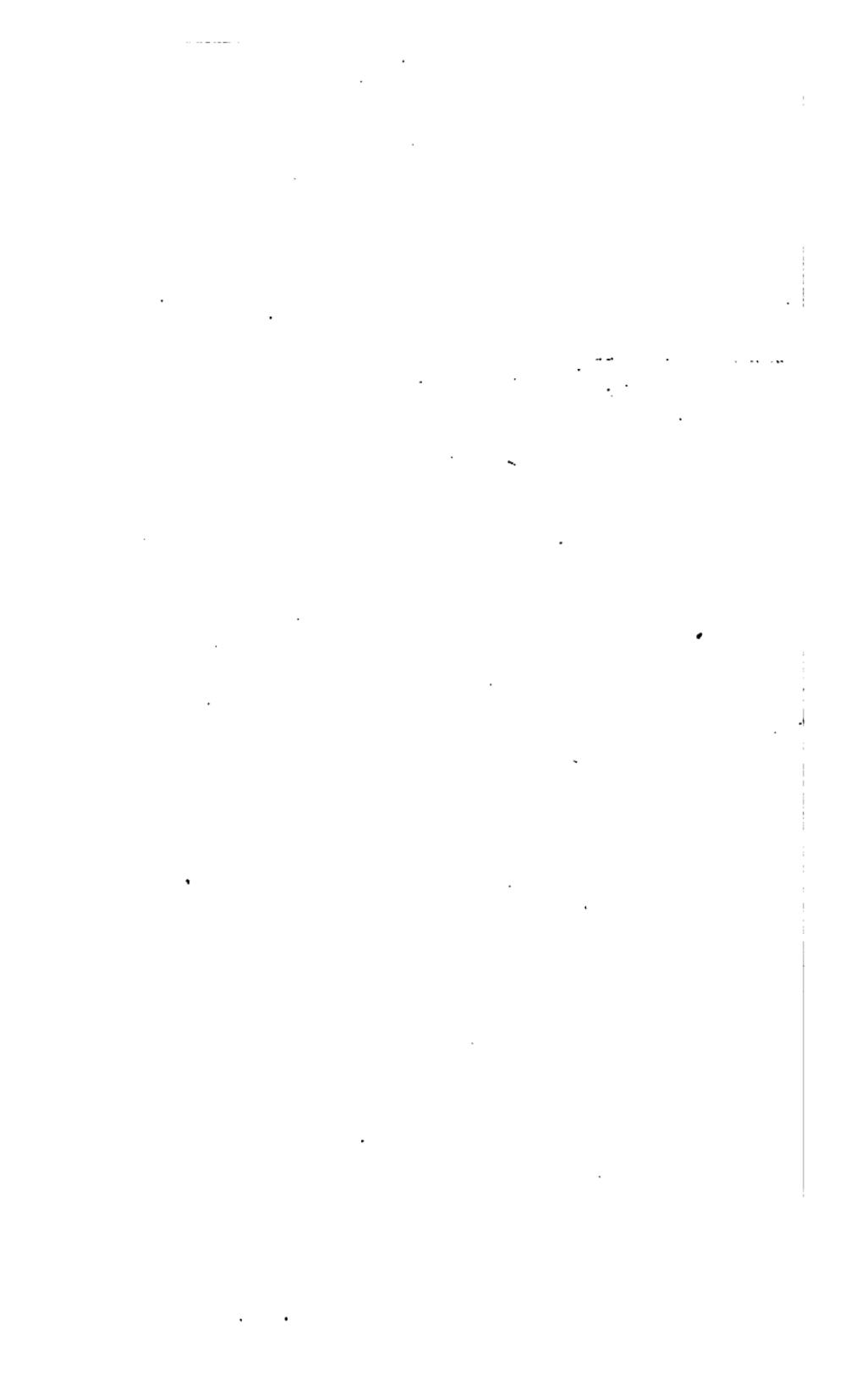
"Mr. Crawford terms the Regency Question '*a vital point.*' So it is—vital to the imperial connexion of the kingdoms; and therefore it is that we Repealers, being ardent friends of the connexion, are desirous to incorporate with the Irish constitution a provision for the identity of the Regent. But the question of the Regent's person, however important to the connexion of the countries, is

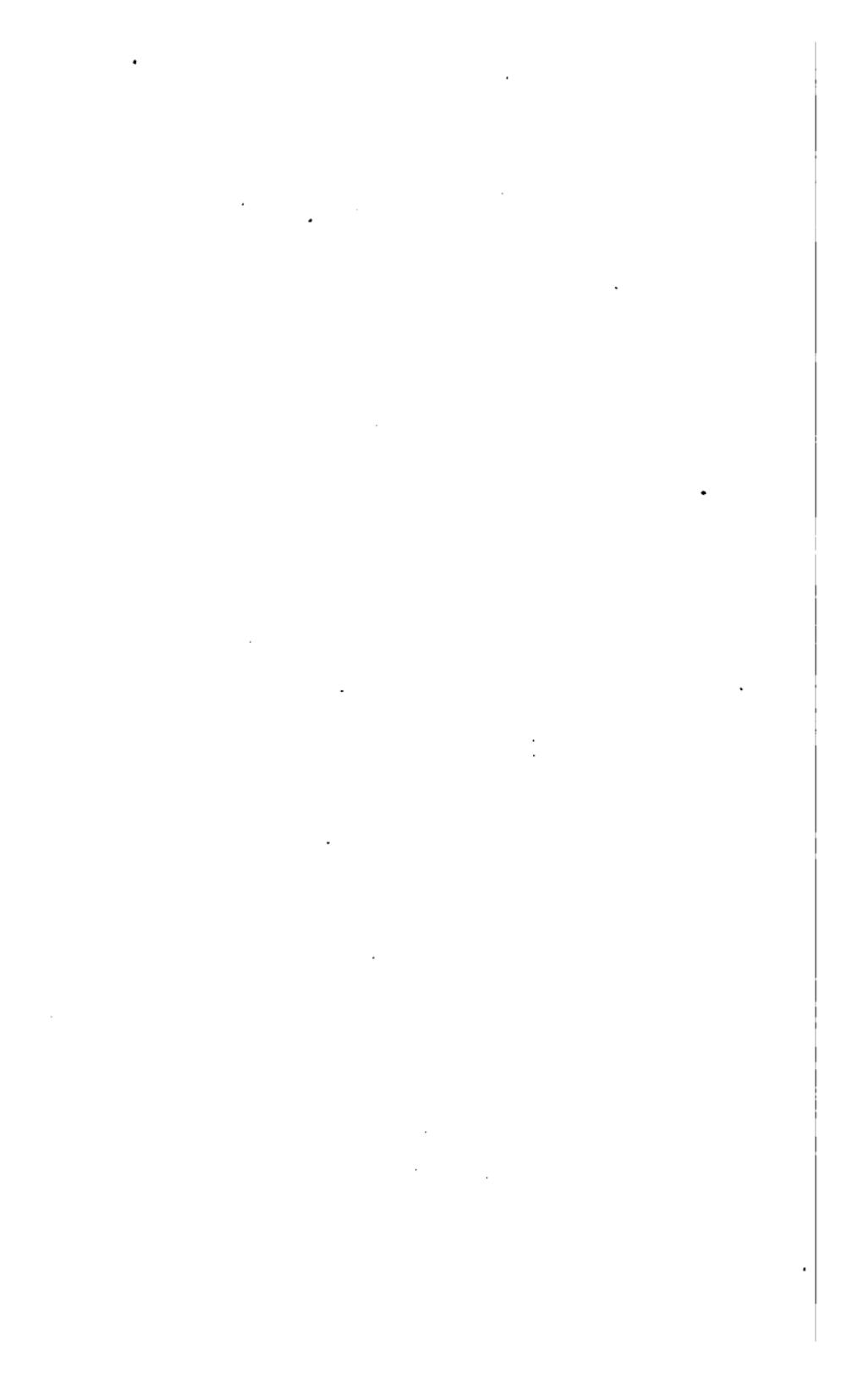
a matter of very inferior importance as affects the general welfare and the every-day comfort of the people—the administration of justice—the prosperity of trade—of manufactures—of commerce. These are the matters of really vital importance to the people—matters which require all the care of a resident, well-constructed popular parliament. Give the people of Ireland such a Parliament as this, and they can well afford to leave to a British ministry the selection of the Regent's person."

FINIS.

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